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# The Englishman and the Sea

AN ANTHOLOGY

EDITED BY

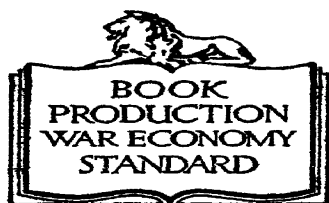
Christopher Lloyd

London

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WOKING

## INTRODUCTION

"It is a naturall, simple, and unaffected speech that I love, so written as it is spoken, and such upon paper, as it is in the mouth, a pithie, sinnowie, full, strong, compendious and materiall speech . . . free, loose and bold, that every member of it seeme to make a bodie; not Pedanticall, nor Frier-like, nor Lawyer-like, but rather downe right, Souldier-like." Sailor-like, too. If the sea has seldom inspired poetry of the highest order, it has produced a surprising amount of prose which achieves Montaigne's standard. The exasperating sentimentalism of Dibdin's "jolly tars," and the drawing-room tenor's yearning to go down to the sea again, find little place in this anthology. Nor does fine writing and false rhetoric, though there are border-line cases in Bolingbroke and Byron. On the other hand, true eloquence may be found not only in the acknowledged masters, but in the gorgeous prose of that inspired grumbler, C. R. Pemberton, whose *Pel Verjuice* is not as well known as it deserves to be.

It may be objected that the colours in which he, and indeed the majority of earlier writers, painted the sea were unduly dark. But in those days, even more than today, the sea was a hard way of life. Those who followed it were a neglected, even a despised, set of men. The great admirals reaped a rich reward of honour; but for the thousands who served them, and the tens of thousands who toiled for employers on shore, the country provided little more than lip service. Sailors were seldom seen at their best on land; they were usually regarded with a curiosity akin to horror. Few landmen had the opportunity to admire their skill and endurance in their own element, a neglect which is, of course, a frequent complaint in the literature of the sea.

In compiling this anthology I have been struck by the comparative silence on the part of real seamen as to why they ever went to sea. "I had read *Robinson Crusoe* many times over and longed to be at sea. . . . Every moment I could spare was spent in boats or about the shore." That, in the words of John Nicol, an ordinary seaman of Nelson's day, is about all that they have to say on the subject. Many reasons for this omission may be suggested; for example, the

vast majority never wished to be at sea at all, but were compelled to by the press gang, by unsympathetic relatives or by force of circumstances; again, most of those who have devoted their lives to it went to sea very young and seldom developed the habit of introspection. The truth is that those who voluntarily adopt such a calling have the sea in their blood. In no other profession does heredity and tradition play such a part.


Another curious omission is that up to the years in which steam began to displace sail there are comparatively few expressions of that love which men bear for their ships. Among modern writers, of course, this is a predominant theme, and I must apologise for omitting Bridges's *Passer By* and Hilaire Belloc's admirable essay, *The Death of a Ship*.

In the past the sea has been feared rather than loved. This is natural enough among those who make their livelihoods by it. Yet most Englishmen feel an instinctive attraction to it. As a nation we have owed so much to it; as landsmen we have felt its mystery, even if, as seamen, we have experienced its cruelty and boredom.

For nothing should we be more grateful to writers of and about the sea than for the gallery of typical Englishmen which they describe. From Chaucer's *Shipman* to Conrad's *Donkin* they represent a side of English life unequalled in racy language and eccentric manners; seldom wholly admirable, they are always a genuine and vital element in our national life. They have their own ballads and chanties, but I have made no attempt to represent these adequately because that has been done so often before. My aim has been to choose the noblest and most living expressions of the Englishman's attitude to the sea, to the men who sail the seas, and the ships they sail in. I hope the following pages illustrate something at least of what we as a people owe to the sea.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## PART I.—THE NATION AND THE SEA

### 1. *Prayer for the Navy*

O ETERNAL Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the seas; who hast compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end; Be pleased to receive into thy Almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us thy servants, and the Fleet in which we serve. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence of the enemy, that we may be a safe-guard unto our most gracious sovereign lord King Charles and his Kingdoms, and a security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawfull occasions; that the inhabitants of our Island may in peace and quietness serve thee our God, and that we may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of the land, with the fruits of our labours; and with a thankful remembrance of thy mercies to praise and glorifie thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Added to the Book of Common Prayer in 1662;  
probably composed by BISHOP SANDERSON.

### 2. *Keep Then the Sea*

Now then, for love of Cryste and of his joye,  
Brynge yet England out of troble and noye;  
Take herte and wite and set a governaunce,  
Set many wites wythouten variaunce  
To one accorde and unanimitie  
Put to gode wyll for to kepe the see,  
Furste for worshyp and for profite also,  
And to rebuke of eche evyl-wylled foo.  
Thus shall richesse and worship to us longe . . .  
Kepe then the see, that is the wall of Englonde,  
And then is Englonde kept by Goddes sonde.

*Libelle of English Policie. c. 1437.*

Noye = harm.

Sonde = grace.

### 3. *Look to your Moat*

I WILL make no other introduction to the following discourse, than that as the importance of our being strong at sea was ever very great, so in our present circumstances it is grown to be much greater; because, as formerly our force of shipping contributed greatly to our trade and safety, so now it is become indispensably necessary to our very being.

It may be said now to England, Martha, Martha, thou art busy about many things, but one thing is necessary. To the question, What shall we do to be saved in this world? there is no other answer but this, Look to your moat.

The first article of an Englishman's political creed must be, that he believeth in the sea, etc., without that there needeth no general council to pronounce him incapable of salvation here.

We are in an island, confined to it by God Almighty, not as a penalty but a grace, and one of the greatest that can be given to mankind. Happy confinement, that hath made us free, rich, and quiet; a fair portion in this world, and very well worth the preserving; a figure that ever hath been envied, and could never be imitated by our neighbours. Our situation hath made greatness abroad by land conquests unnatural things to us. It is true, we have made excursions, and glorious ones too, which make our names great in history, but they did not last.

HALIFAX: *Rough Draft of a New Model  
at Sea* (1694).

### 4. *An Amphibious Nation*

"ARE we never to be soldiers?" it will be said. Yes, constantly, in such proportion as is necessary for the defence of good government. To establish such a military force as none but bad governors can want, is to establish tyrannical power in the king or in the ministers; and may be wanted by the latter, when the former would be secure without his army, if he broke his minister. Occasionally too we must be soldiers, and for offence as well as defence; but in propor-

tion to the nature of the conjuncture, considered always relatively to the difference here insisted upon between our situation, our interest, and the nature of our strength, compared with those of the other powers of Europe; and not in proportion to the desires, or even to the wants, of the nations with whom we are confederated. Like other amphibious animals, we must come occasionally on shore: but the water is more properly our element, and in it, like them, as we find our greatest security, so we exert our greatest force.

BOLINGBROKE: *Idea of a Patriot King.*

### 5. *Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms*

To be master of the sea is an abridgement of monarchy. . . . We see the great effects of battles by sea. The battle of Actium decided the empire of the world. The battle of Lepanto arrested the greatness of the Turk. There be many examples where sea-fights have been final to the war: but this is when princes, or States, have set up their rest upon the battles. But thus much is certain, that he that commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much and as little of the war as he will. Whereas those that be strongest by land are many times, nevertheless, in great straits. Surely, at this day, with us of Europe, the vantage of strength at sea (which is one of the principal dowries of this kingdom of Great Britain) is great; both because most of the kingdoms of Europe are not merely inland, but girt with the sea most part of their compass; and because the wealth of both Indies seems, in great part, but an accessory to the command of the seas.

BACON: *Essays.*

### 6. *The Historian's Comment*

OF late years the world has become so deeply impressed with the efficacy of sea power that we are inclined to forget how impotent it is of itself to decide a war against great Continental states, how

tedious is the pressure of naval action unless it be nicely co-ordinated with military and diplomatic pressure. It was fifteen years after the defeat of the Armada before we could obtain peace with Spain. It was ten years after Trafalgar before revolutionary France accepted defeat. "We English," wrote Nelson in the Gulf of Genoa (1796), where he was first brought face to face with the ultimate problems of his art, "we English have to regret that we cannot always decide the fate of Empires on the sea."

CORBETT: *England and the Seven Years War*.

### 7. *The Lady of the Sea*

FOR the air is most temperate and wholesome, sited in the midst of the temperate Zone, subject to no storms and tempests as the more Southern and Northern are; but stored with infinite delicate fowl. For water, it is walled and guarded with the Ocean most commodious for traffick to all parts of the world, and watered with pleasant fishfull and navigable rivers, which yield safe havens and roads, and furnished with shipping and Sailors, that it may rightly be termed the *Lady of the Sea*.

WILLIAM CAMDEN: *Remaines concerning Britain*.

### 8. *The Services of the Sea*

THUS should man at once lose half his inheritance if the art of navigation did not enable him to manage this untamed beast, and with the bridle of the winds and saddle of his shipping to make him serviceable. Now for the services of the sea, they are innumerable: it is the great purveyor of the world's commodities to our use, conveyer of the excess of rivers, uniter by traffick of all nations: it presents the eye with the diversified colours and motions, and is, as it were with rich brooches, adorned with various islands: it is an open field for merchandise in peace; a pitched field for the most dreadful fights of war; yields diversity of fish and fowl for diet, materials for wealth, medicine for health, simples for medicines,

pearls and other jewels for ornament, amber and ambergris for delight, the wonders of the Lord in the deep for instruction, variety of creatures for use, multiplicity of natures for contemplation, diversity of accidents for admiration, compendiousness to the way, to full bodies healthful evacuation, to the thirsty earth fertile moisture, to distant friends pleasant meeting, to weary persons delightful refreshing, to studious and religious minds a map of knowledge, mystery of temperance, exercise of continence, school of prayer, meditation, devotion, and sobriety; refuge to the distressed, portage to the merchant, passage to the traveller, customs to the prince, springs, lakes, rivers, to the earth; it hath on it tempests and calms to chastise the sins, to exercise the faith, of seamen; manifold affections in itself, to affect and stupify the subtlest philosopher; sustaineth moveable fortresses for the soldier; maintaineth (as in our island) a wall of defence and watery garrison to guard the state; entertains the sun with vapours, the moon with obsequiousness, the stars also with a natural looking-glass, the sky with clouds, the air with temperateness, the soil with suppleness, the rivers with tides, the hills with moisture, the valleys with fertility; containeth most diversified matter for meteors, most multiform shapes, most various, numerous kinds, most immense difformed, deformed, unformed, monsters; once (for why should I longer detain you:) the sea yields action to the body, meditation to the mind, the world to the world, all parts thereof to each part, by this art of arts, navigation.

SAMUEL PURCHAS: *His Pilgrimage*

### 9. *The Thread of Honour*

As for honour, who knows not (that knows anything) that in all records of late times of actions chronicled to the everlasting fame and renown of this Kingdom, still the naval part is the thread that runs through the whole wooff, the burden of the song, the scope of the text:

HOLLOND: *First Discourse of the Navy* (1638).



10. *The Port of London*

ME-THINKS already, from this Chymick flame,  
I see a City of more precious mold:  
Rich as the Town which gives the *Indies* name,  
With Silver pav'd, and all divine with Gold.

More great than human, now, and more *August*,  
Now deified she from her Fires does rise:  
Her widening Streets, on new Foundations trust,  
And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

Now, like a Maiden Queen, she will behold,  
From her high Turrets, hourly Suitors come:  
The East, with Incense and the West with Gold,  
Will stand, like Suppliants, to receive her Doom.

The silver *Thames*, her own domestick Floud,  
Shall bear her Vessels, like a sweeping Train;  
And often wind (as of his Mistress proud)  
With longing eyes to meet her Face again.

The wealthy *Tagus*, and the wealthier *Rhine*,  
The glory of their Towns no more shall boast;  
And *Sein*, that would with *Belgian* Rivers join,  
Shall find her Lustre stain'd, and Traffick lost.

The vent'rous Merchant, who design'd more far,  
And touches on our hospitable Shore,  
Charm'd with the Splendour of this Northern Star,  
Shall here unlade him, and depart no more.

Our pow'rful Navy shall no longer meet,  
The wealth of *France* or *Holland* to invade:  
The beauty of this Town without a Fleet,  
From all the World shall vindicate her Trade.

And while this fam'd Emporium we prepare,  
The *British* Ocean shall such Triumphs boast,  
That those who now disdain our Trade to share,  
Shall rob like Pyrats on our wealthy Coast.

Already we have conquer'd half the War,  
And the less dang'rous part is left behind:  
Our Trouble now is but to make them dare,  
And not so great to Vanquish as to Find.

Thus to the Eastern wealth through Storms we go,  
But now, the Cape once doubled, fear no more:  
A constant Trade-wind will securely blow,  
And gently lay us on the Spicy shore.

JOHN DRYDEN: *Annus Mirabilis* (1666).

## II. *The West Wind*

THE West Wind reigns over the seas surrounding the coasts of these kingdoms; and from the gateways of the channels, from promontories as if from watch-towers, from estuaries of rivers as if from postern gates, from passage-ways, inlets, straits, firths, the garrison of the Isle and the crews of the ships going and returning look to the westward to judge by the varied splendours of his sunset mantle the mood of that arbitrary ruler. The end of the day is the time to gaze at the kingly face of the Westerly Weather, who is the arbiter of ships' destinies. Benignant and splendid, or splendid and sinister, the western sky reflects the hidden purposes of the royal mind. Clothed in a mantle of dazzling gold or draped in rags of black clouds like a beggar, the might of the Westerly Wind sits enthroned upon the western horizon with the whole North Atlantic as a footstool for his feet and the first twinkling stars making a diadem for his brow. Then the seamen, attentive courtiers of the weather, think of regulating the conduct of their ships by the mood

of the master. The West Wind is too great a king to be a dissembler: he is no calculator plotting deep schemes in a sombre heart; he is too strong for small artifices; there is passion in all his moods, even in the soft mood of his serene days, in the grace of his blue sky whose immense and unfathomable tenderness reflected in the mirror of the sea embraces, possesses, lulls to sleep the ships with white sails. He is all things to all oceans; he is like a poet seated upon a throne—magnificent, simple, barbarous, pensive, generous, impulsive, changeable, unfathomable—but when you understand him, always the same. Some of his sunsets are like pageants devised for the delight of the multitude, when all the gems of the royal treasure-house are displayed above the sea. Others are like the opening of his royal confidence, tinged with thoughts of sadness and compassion in a melancholy splendour meditating upon the short-lived peace of the waters. And I have seen him put the pent-up anger of his heart into the aspect of the inaccessible sun, and cause it to glare fiercely like the eye of an implacable autocrat out of a pale and frightened sky.

He is the war-lord who sends his battalions of Atlantic rollers to the assault of our seaboard. The compelling voice of the West Wind musters up to his service all the might of the ocean. At the bidding of the West Wind there arises a great commotion in the sky above these Islands, and a great rush of waters falls upon our shores. The sky of the westerly weather is full of flying clouds, of great big white clouds coming thicker and thicker till they seem to stand welded into a solid canopy, upon whose grey face the lower wrack of the gale, thin, black, and angry-looking, flies past with vertiginous speed. Denser and denser grows this dome of vapours, descending lower and lower upon the sea, narrowing the horizon around the ship. And the characteristic aspect of westerly weather, the thick, grey, smoky, and sinister tone sets in, circumscribing the view of the men, drenching their bodies, oppressing their souls, taking their breath away with booming gusts, deafening, blinding, driving, rushing them onwards in a swaying ship towards our coasts lost in mists and rain.

CONRAD: *The Mirror of the Sea.*

12. *Insolence of the Barbary Corsairs*

SIR,

My last unto you was from this place, of 14th March, since which time I have not had any opportunity of sending unto you, by reason of our various motions and the stop which hath been put upon us in those places, where was no means of conveyance by reason of contrary and stormy winds, such as have scarcely been known in those parts.

In that letter I gave you some account of what had passed between us and those of Tunis, refusing to do us any justice in order of my demands, according to the particular instructions I received to that purpose. Also, I wrote of our withdrawing from that place for a while, with an intention to return thither, which we did upon the 18th of that month. After our arrival we found them more wilful and untractable than before, adding to their obstinacy much insolence and contumely, denying us all commerce of civility, and hindering all others as much as they could from the same.

These barbarous provocations did so far work upon our spirits that we judged it necessary, for the honour of our fleet, our nation, and religion, seeing that they would not deal with us as friends, to make them feel us as enemies; and it was thereupon resolved, at a council of war, to endeavour the firing of their ships in Porto Farina. . . .

Sir, I have no more at present to trouble you with, but only desire you to present my humble service and duty to his Highness, the Lord Protector. Recommending you to the Lord, I remain your very affectionate friend and servant,

ROBERT BLAKE: Letter to Secretary Thurloe. Aboard  
the *George* in Calary Bay, April 28, 1655.

13. *Nelson's Departure*

EARLY on the following morning he reached Portsmouth; and having dispatched his business on shore, endeavoured to elude the populace by taking a by-way to the beach; but a crowd collected

in his train, pressing forward, to obtain sight of his face: many were in tears, and many knelt down before him, and blessed him as he passed. England has had many heroes; but never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow-countrymen as Nelson. All men knew that his heart was as humane as it was fearless; that there was not in his nature the slightest alloy of selfishness or cupidity; but that, with perfect and entire devotion, he served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; and, therefore, they loved him as truly as and fervently as he loved England. They pressed upon the parapet, to gaze after him as his barge pushed off, and he was returning their cheers by waving his hat. The sentinels, who endeavoured to prevent them from trespassing upon this ground, were wedged among the crowd; and an officer, who, not very prudently upon such an occasion, ordered them to drive the people down with their bayonets, was compelled speedily to retreat; for the people would not be debarred from gazing, till the last moment, upon the hero—the darling hero of England!

SOUTHEY: *Life of Nelson.*

#### 14. *A Marine's Account of Trafalgar*

DEAR SISTER,

Comes with my kind love to you are in good health so thank God I am; for I am very certain that it is by His Mercy that me and my country is, and you and your religion is kept up; for it has pleased the Almighty God for to give us a complete victory of the combined fleets of France and Spain; for there was a signal for them being out of Cadiz the 19th of October, but we did not see them till the 21st, in the morning, and about 12 o'clock we gave three cheers, and then the engagement began very hot on both sides, but about five o'clock the victory was ours, and twenty sail-of-the-line struck to us. They had 34 sail-of-the-line and we had 27 of the line, but the worst of it was, the flower of the country, Lord Nelson, got wounded at twelve minutes past one o'clock, and closed his eyes in the midst of victory. Dear sister, it pleased the Lord to spare my life, and my brother Thomas his, for he was with

the same gentleman. It was very sharp for us, I assure you, for we had not a moment's time till it was over, and the 23rd of the same instant we got a most shocking gale of wind, and we expected to go to the bottom, but, thanks be to God, He had mercy on us, for every ship of ours got safe into harbour, and all the French but four got knocked to pieces on the rocks. So that is the most I can tell you of it, for the English is in a right cause you may depend on it, or else the Lord would not have had the mercy on us as He has had, for we made five ships strike to the ship has I am in. We had 125 killed and wounded, and 1500 in the English fleet killed and wounded, and the enemy 12,000; so I shall leave you to judge how your country fights for the religion you enjoy, the laws you possess, and on the other hand how Bounaparte has trumphet them causes down in the places he has had concern with, for nothing but torment is going forward. So never think it is a disgrace to having brothers in the service; but I have had pretty well on it, and when you write to our mother, give my love to my sister Betty and my poor mother, and send me word about her and you shall have your loving brother's thanks. So must conclude with hoping this will bring you peace and love and unity. Then you and me and our dear mother will meet together to enjoy the fruits of the island I have been fighting for. My dear, I shall just give you a description of Lord Nelson. He is a man about five feet seven, very slender, of an affable temper; but a rare man for his country, and has been in 123 actions and skirmishes, and got wounded with a small ball, but it was mortal. It was his last word, that it was his lot for me to go, but I am going to heaven, but never haul down your colours to France, for your men will stick to you. These words was to Captain Hardy, and so we did, for we came off victorious, and they have behaved well to us, for they wanted to take Lord Nelson from us, but we told Captain as we brought him out we would bring him home; so it was so, and he was put into a cask of spirits. So I must conclude.

Your loving brother,

JAMES BAGLEY,

*Victory. Spithead. December 5, 1805.*

15. *Devotion to Duty*

I AM just now cruising with my fleet off Maritimo, and intend continuing here until I get information to lead me to the French, which I expect very soon, and then hope that God will bless me. Our Country requires that great exertions should be made to maintain its independence and its glory. You know, when I am in earnest on any subject, how truly I devote myself to it; and the first object of my life, and what my heart is most bent on (I hope you will excuse me), is the glory of my Country. To stand a barrier between the ambition of France and the independence of England, is the first wish of my life; and in my death, I would rather that my body, if it were possible, should be added to the rampart, than trailed in useless pomp through an idle throng.

COLLINGWOOD to his wife. *Ocean*. March 9, 1808.

16. *A Grateful Country?*

IN the month of August, last year, a cousin of my own made me a present of as much money as carried me to London. I sailed in the *Hawk*, London smack. I was only a steerage passenger; but fared as well as the cabin passengers. I was held constantly in tow by the passengers. My spirits were up. I was at sea again. I had not trode a deck for twenty years before. I had always a crowd round me, listening to my accounts of the former voyages that I had made. Every one was more kind to me than another. I was very happy.

Upon my arrival in London I waited upon my old captain, Portlock; but Fortune was now completely against me. He had been dead six weeks before my arrival. I left the house; my spirits sunk with grief for his death, and my own disappointment, as my chief dependance was upon his aid. I then went to Somerset House for the certificate of my service; seven years in the *Proteus*, and *Surprise*, in the American War, and seven in the *Edgar*, *Goliath*, *Ramillies*, and *Ajax*, in the French War. I was ordered to go to the Admiralty Office first and then come back to Somerset House. When I applied at the Admiralty Office, a clerk told me I had been

too long of applying. I then went down to the Governor of Greenwich Hospital. I was not acquainted with him; but I knew the Governor of Greenwich would be a distressed seaman's friend. His servant told me he was in Scotland. I then waited upon Captain Gore, whose son's life I had saved, but he was not at home. It was of no use to remain in London, as my money wore down apace. I took my passage back to Edinburgh in the *Favourite*, London smack, and arrived just four weeks from my first setting out on this voyage of disappointment. What can I do? I must just take what Fortune has still in store for me.

At one time, after I came home, I little thought I should ever require to apply for a pension; and, therefore, made no application until I really stood in need of it.

I eke out my subsistence in the best manner I can. Coffee made from the raspings of bread (which I obtain from the bakers), twice a day, is my chief diet. A few potatoes, or any thing I can obtain with a few pence, constitute my dinner. My only luxury is tobacco, which I have used these forty-five years. To beg I never will submit. Could I have obtained a small pension for my past services, I should then have reached my utmost earthly wish, and the approach of utter helplessness would not haunt me as it at present does in my solitary home. Should I be forced to sell it, all I would obtain could not keep me, and pay for lodgings for one year; then I must go to the poor's-house, which God in his mercy forbid. I can look to my death-bed with resignation; but to the poor's-house I cannot look with composure.

I have been a wanderer, and the child of chance, all my days; and now only look for the time when I shall enter my last ship, and be anchored with the green turf upon my breast; and I care not how soon the command is given.

*Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner.* 1822.

### 17. Sea Power

MEANWHILE that period of waiting from May, 1803, to August, 1805, when the tangled net of naval and military movements began



to unravel, was a striking and wonderful pause in the world's history. On the heights above Boulogne, and along the narrow strip of beach from Etaples to Vimereux, were encamped one hundred and thirty thousand of the most brilliant soldiery of all time, the soldiers who had fought in Germany, Italy, and Egypt, soldiers who were to win, from Austria, Ulm and Austerlitz, and from Prussia, Auerstadt and Jena, to hold their own, though barely, at Eylau against the army of Russia, and to overthrow it also, a few months later, on the bloody field of Friedland. Growing daily more vigorous in the bracing sea air and the hardy life laid out for them, they could on fine days, as they practised the varied manœuvres which were to perfect the vast host in embarking and disembarking with order and rapidity, see the white cliffs fringing the only country that to the last defied their arms. Far away, Cornwallis off Brest, Colingwood off Rochefort, Pellew off Ferrol, were battling with the wild gales of the Bay of Biscay, in that tremendous and sustained vigilance which reached its utmost tension in the years preceding Trafalgar, concerning which Collingwood wrote that admirals need to be made of iron, but which was forced upon them by the unquestionable and imminent danger of the country. Farther distant still, severed apparently from all connection with the busy scene at Boulogne, Nelson before Toulon was wearing away the last two years of his glorious but suffering life, fighting the fierce north-westerners of the Gulf of Lyon and questioning, questioning continually with feverish anxiety, whether Napoleon's object was Egypt again or Great Britain really. They were dull, weary, eventless months, those months of watching and waiting of the big ships before the French arsenals. Purposeless they surely seemed to many, but they saved England. The world has never seen a more impressive demonstration of the influence of sea power upon its history. Those far distant, storm-beaten ships, upon which the Grand Army never looked, stood between it and the dominion of the world.

MAHAN: *The Influence of Sea Power upon  
the French Revolution and Empire.*

18. *The Ocean*

ROLL on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—Roll!  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;  
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields  
Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise  
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields  
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,  
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray,  
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies  
His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
And dashest him again to earth—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
Their clay creators the vain title take  
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;  
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—  
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?  
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,  
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey  
The stranger, slave or savage; their decay

Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,  
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—  
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests: in all time,  
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—  
The image of Eternity—the throne  
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone  
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy  
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me  
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

BYRON: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

### 19. Sonnet

It keeps eternal whisperings around  
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell  
Gluts twice then thousand caverns, till the spell  
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.  
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,  
That scarcely will the very smallest shell  
Be mov'd for days from whence it sometime fell,  
When last the winds of heaven were unbound.

Oh ye! who have your eyeballs vex'd and tir'd,  
Feast them upon the wideness of the sea;  
Oh ye! whose ears are dinn'd with uproar rude,  
Or fed too much with cloying melody,—  
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and brood  
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quir'd!

KEATS.

### 20. *The Bottom of the Sea*

METHOUGHT I saw a thousand fearful wrecks;  
Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;  
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,  
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,  
All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea.  
Some lay in dead men's skulls; and, in those holes  
Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,  
(As 'twere in scorn of eyes), reflecting gems,  
That woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,  
And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

SHAKESPEARE: *Richard III*

### 21. *Dover Beach*

The sea is calm tonight.  
The tide is full, the moon lies fair  
Upon the Straits;—on the French coast, the light  
Gleams, and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,  
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.  
Come to the window, sweet is the night air!  
Only, from the long line of spray  
Where the ebb meets the moon-blanch'd sand,  
Listen! you hear the grating roar  
Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling,

At their return, up the high strand,  
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,  
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring  
The eternal note of sadness in.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

## 22. *Crossing the Bar*

SUNSET and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.

TENNYSON.

## PART II.—THE CALL OF THE SEA

### 23. *On Sailing the Seas*

I NEVER sail the sea but I wonder what makes a people take to it, and then leave it again. Nor have I ever seen an explanation of this; therefore it is that the speculation is of value, for it is one of those which go round and round upon themselves and never come to an end, and so give entertainment to the mind.

When you read in books that such-and-such a nation took to the sea you are usually given a very pretty little explanation of a material kind, as is the modern fashion. They took to the sea because they were situated at such-and-such a point, because the sea they lived on was sheltered, or because they had very good harbours.

It is all nonsense. Those who write like that cannot themselves have sailed the sea. To sail the sea is an occupation at once repulsive and attractive. It is repulsive because it is dangerous, horribly uncomfortable, cramped and unnatural: for man is a land animal. It is attractive because it brings adventure and novelty at every moment, and because, looking back upon it, a man feels a certain pride in danger overcome and in experience. But it is also attractive in another and much more powerful fashion. It is attractive by a sort of appetite. A man having sailed the sea and the habit having bitten into him, he will always return to it: why, he cannot tell you. It is what modern people call a "lure" or a "call." He has got it in him and it will not let him rest.

HILAIRE BELLOC: *On*.

### 24. *The Call of the Sea*

To The Right Honourable SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM, Knight.

Right Honorable, I do remember that being a youth, and one of her Majesties scholars at Westminster that fruitfull nurserie, it was my happe to visit the chamber of M. Richard Hakluyt my

cosin, a Gentleman of the Middle Temple, well knowen unto you, at a time when I found lying open upon his boord certeine bookes of Cosmographie, with an universall Mappe: he seeing me somewhat curious in the view therof, began to instruct my ignorance, by shewing me the division of the earth into three parts after the olde account, and then according to the latter, and better distribution, into more: he pointed with his wand to all the knowen Seas, Bayes, Gulfs, Straights, Capes, Rivers, Empires, Kingdomes, Dukedomes, and Territories of ech part, with declaration also of their special commodities, and particular wants, which by the benefit of traffike, and entercourse of merchants, are plentifully supplied. From the Mappe he brought me to the Bible, and turning to the 107 Psalme, directed mee to the 23 and 24 verses, where I read, that they which go down to the sea in ships, and occupy by great waters, they see the works of the Lord, and his woonders in the deepe, etc. Which words of the Prophet together with my cousins discourse (things of rare and high delight to my yong nature) tooke in me so deepe an impression, that I constantly resolved, if ever I were preferred to the University, where better time, and more convenient place might be ministered for these studies, I would by Gods assistance prosecute that knowledge and kinde of literature, the doores whereof (after a sort) were so happily opened before me.

According to which my resolution, when, not long after, I was removed to Christ-church in Oxford, my exercises of duety first performed I fell to my intended courses, and by degrees read over whatsoever printed or written discoveries or voyages I found extant either in the Greeke, Latine, Italian, Spanish, Portugall, French, or English languages, and in my publicke lectures was the first, that produced and shewed both the olde imperfectly composed, and the new lately reformed Mappes, Globes, Spheares, and other instruments of this Art for demonstration in the common schooles, to the singular pleasure and generall contentment of my auditory. In continuance of time, I grew familiarly acquainted with the chieftest Captaines at sea, the greatest Merchants, and the best Mariners of our nation: by which means having gotten somewhat

more than common knowledge, I passed at length the narrow seas in to France with sir Edward Stafford, her Majesties careful and discreet Ligier, where during my five years abroad with him in his dangerous and chargeable residencie in her Highness service, I both heard in speech, and read in books other nations miraculously extolled for their discoveries and notable enterprises by sea, but the English of all others for their sluggish security, and continuall neglect of the like attempts especially in so long and happy a time of peace, either ignominiously reported, or exceedingly condemned. . . .

To harpe no longer upon this string, and to speake a word of that just commendation which our nation doe indeed deserve: it can not be denied, but as in all former ages, they have bene men full of activity, stirrers abroad, and searchers of the remote parts of the world, so in this most famous and peerlesse government of her most excellent Majesty, her subjects through the speciall assistance, and blessing of God, in searching the most opposite corners and quarters of the world, and to speake plainly, in compassing the vaste globe of the earth more than once, have excelled all the nations and people of the earth. For, which of the kings of this land before her Majesty, had theyr banners ever seene in the Caspian see? which of them have ever dealt with the Emperour of Persia, as her Majesty hath done, and obtained for her merchants large and loving privileges? who ever saw before this regiment an English Ligier in the stately porch of the Grand Signor at Constantinople? who ever found English Consuls and Agents at Tripolis in Syria, at Aleppo, at Babylon, at Balsara, and which is more, who ever heard of Englishman at Goa before now? what English shippes did heertofore ever anker in the mighty river of Plate? passe and repasse the unpassable (in former opinion) straight of Magellan, range along the coast of Chili, Peru, and all the backside of Nova Hispania, further than any Christian ever passed, travers the mighty bredth of the South sea, land upon the Luzones in despight of the enemy, enter into alliance, amity, and trafficke with the princes of the Moluccaes, and the Isle of Java, double the famous Cape of Bona Speranza, arrive at the Isle of Santa Heiena, and last of all



returne home most richly laden with the commodities of China, as the subjects of this now most flourishing monarchy have done :

The Epistle Dedicatorie in the first edition  
of Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589).

## 25. *Running Away to Sea*

TOWARDS the autumn of 1782 I went to visit a relation who lived in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth. From the top of Portsdown I, for the first time, beheld the sea, and no sooner did I behold it than I wished to be a sailor. I could never account for this sudden impulse, nor can I now. Almost all English boys feel the same inclination: it would seem that, like young ducks, instinct leads them to rush on the bosom of the water.

But it was not the sea alone that I saw: the grand fleet was riding at anchor at Spithead: I had formed my ideas of a ship and of a fleet; but what I now beheld so far surpassed what I had ever been able to form a conception of that I stood lost between astonishment and admiration. I had heard talk of the glorious deeds of our Admirals and sailors, of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and of all those memorable combats that good and true Englishmen never fail to relate to their children about a hundred times a year. The brave Rodney's victories over our natural enemies, the French and Spaniards, had long been the theme of our praise, and the burden of our songs. The sight of the fleet brought all these into my mind; in confused order, it is true, but with irresistible force. My heart was inflated with national pride. The sailors were my countrymen; the fleet belonged to my country, and surely I had my part in it, and in all its honours: yet, these honours I had not earned; I took to myself a sort of reproach for possessing what I had no right to, and resolved to have a just claim by sharing in the hardships and dangers.

I arrived at my uncle's late in the evening with my mind full of my sea-faring project. Though I had walked thirty miles during the day, and consequently was well wearied, I slept not a moment. It was no sooner daylight, than I arose and walked down towards the

old castle, on the beach of Spithead. For a sixpence given to an invalid, I got permission to go upon the battlements: here I had a closer view of the fleet, and at every look my impatience to be on board increased. In short, I went from the castle to Portsmouth, got into a boat, and was in a few minutes on board the *Pegasus*, man of war.

The Captain had more compassion than is generally met with in men of his profession: he represented to me the toils I must undergo, and the punishment that the least disobedience or neglect would subject me to. He persuaded me to return home, and I remember he concluded his advice, with telling me that it was better to be led to church in a halter, to be tied to the girl that I did not like, than to be tied to the gang-way, or, as the sailors call it, married to *Miss Roper*. From the conclusion to this wholesome counsel I perceived that the captain thought I had eloped on account of a bastard. I blushed, and that confirmed him in his opinion. . . .

I in vain attempted to convince Captain Berkley, that choice alone had led me to the sea; he sent me on shore, and I at last quitted Portsmouth; but not before I had applied to the Port-Admiral, Evans, to get my name enrolled among those who were destined for the service. I was, in some sort, obliged to acquaint the Admiral with what had passed on board the *Pegasus*, in consequence of which my request was refused, and I happily escaped, sorely against my will, from the most toilsome and perilous profession in the world.

I returned once more to the plough, but I was spoiled for a farmer.

WM. COBBETT: *The Life and Adventures of Peter Porcupine*.

## 26. *In Praise of Seafaring Men, in Hope of Good Fortune*

WHO seeks the way to win renown,  
Or flies with wings of high desire,  
Who seeks to wear the laureate crown,  
Or hath the mind that would aspire,

Let him his native soil eschew,  
Let him go range and seek a new.

Each haughty heart is well content,  
With every chance that shall betide;  
No hap can hinder his intent;  
He steadfast stands, though fortune slide.  
The sun, quoth he, doth shine as well  
Abroad, as erst where I did dwell.

To pass the seas some think a toil,  
Some think it strange abroad to roam,  
Some think it a grief to leave their soil,  
Their parents, kinfolk, and their home.  
Think so who list, I like it not;  
I must abroad to try my lot.

SIR RICHARD GRENVILLE'S *Farewell*.

## 27. *Cordial Advice*

*to all rash young Men, who think to advance their decaying Fortunes by Navigation: Showing the many hardships and Dangers that Sailors endure.*

You merchant men of Billingsgate,  
I wonder how you can thrive,  
You bargain for men for six months,  
and pay them but for five:  
But so long as the water runs under the bridge,  
and the tide doth ebb and flow,  
I'll no more to Greenland sail,  
no, no, no.

Our Captains and Commanders,  
are valiant men and stout;  
They've fought in France and Flanders,  
and never wou'd give out,

They beat our men like stock-fish,  
all to increase our woe:  
Then I'll no more, etc. . . .

Testy Neptune's mounting waves,  
still o'er our hatches tower:  
Each minute threatens silent graves  
for fishes to devour;  
Or be entombed by some vast whale  
and there to end our woe:  
But I'll no more, etc. . . .

Therefore young men I all advise,  
before it is too late,  
And then you'll say that you are wise,  
by dashing of your fate:  
The which your rashness did entail,  
for to insist your woe:  
Then I'll no more to Greenland sail,  
no, no, no.

ANON.

### 28. *The Sailor Boy*

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,  
Shot o'er the seething harbour-bar,  
And reach'd the ship and caught the rope,  
And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud  
He heard a fierce mermaid cry,  
"O boy, though thou art young and proud,  
I see the place where thou wilt lie.

"The sands and yeasty surges mix  
In caves about the dreary bay,  
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,  
And in thy heart the crawl shall play."

"Fool," he answered, "death is sure  
To those that stay and those that roam,  
But I will never more endure  
To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,  
My sisters crying, 'Stay for shame':  
My father raves of death and wreck,  
They are all to blame, they are all to blame.

"God help me! save I take my part  
Of danger on the roaring sea,  
A devil rises in my heart,  
Far worse than any death to me."

TENNYSON.

### 29. *To Be A Sailor*

IN going across the harbour we passed close under the stern of the old *Royal George*. It was the first time I ever floated on salt water; the first hundred-gun ship I ever saw. Ye gods! what a sight—what a sensation! I feel it now as I write, and if I live to the age of Methuselah it will remain unimpaired, and even fresh to the last moment. It is impossible to forget the breathless astonishment and delight with which my eyes were fixed upon this ship. Nothing so exquisitely touching has ever occurred to me since to produce the same frantic joy. After the first exclamation of ecstasy I for a time spoke not a word; overwhelmed by a thousand feelings, and almost motionless, until presently, as we approached nearer to the *Royal George*, and went closely under her richly carved stern, I broke into a rapid succession of questions, and jumping about, and almost springing out of the hands of the strokesman of the boat, who held me as I stood upon the seat, I was told I should tumble into the sea if I was not quiet. What nonsense! Who could be quiet under such circumstances?

I remember old John Allen, who had been Sir Samuel Hood's

coxswain when commodore in America, and then in the same capacity in my father's boat, said, "I see, sir, you are already determined to be a sailor." He never spoke a truer word, for the first comment of my mind fixed in an instant, and for ever, that determination.

Journal of SIR T. BYAM MARTIN (1781).

### 30. *Solomon Gills and his Nephew*

"As to the Sea," he pursued, "that's well enough in fiction, Wally, but it won't do in fact; it won't do at all. It's natural enough that you should think about it, associating it with all these familiar things; but it won't do, it won't do."

Solomon Gills rubbed his hands with an air of stealthy enjoyment, as he talked of the sea, though; and looked on the seafaring objects about him, with inexpressible complacency.

"Think of this wine, for instance," said old Sol, "which has been to the East Indies and back, I'm not able to say how often, and has been once round the world. Think of the pitch-dark nights, the roaring winds, and rolling seas:"

"The thunder, lightning, rain, hail, storm of all kinds," said the boy.

"To be sure," said Solomon, "—that this wine has passed through. Think what a straining and creaking of timbers and masts; what a whistling and howling of the gale through ropes and rigging."

"What a clambering aloft of men, vying with each other who shall lie out first upon the yards to furl the icy sails, while the ship rolls and pitches, like mad!" cried his nephew.

"Exactly so," said Solomon: "has gone on, over the old cask that held this wine. Why, when the *Charming Sally* went down in the——"

"In the Baltic Sea, in the dead of the night; five-and-twenty minutes past twelve when the captain's watch stopped in his pocket; he lying dead against the main-mast—of the fourteenth of February, seventeen forty-nine!" cried Walter, with great animation.

"Ay, to be sure!" cried old Sol, "quite right! Then, there were five hundred casks of such wine aboard: and all hands (except the first mate, first lieutenant, two seamen, and a lady, in a leaky boat) going to work to stave the casks, got drunk and died drunk, singing 'Rule Britannia,' when she settled and went down, and ending with one awful scream in chorus."

"But when the *George the Second* drove ashore, Uncle, on the coast of Cornwall, in a dismal gale, two hours before daybreak, on the fourth of March, 'seventy-one, she had near two hundred horses aboard; and the horses breaking loose down below, early in the gale, and tearing to and fro, and trampling each other to death, made such noises, and set up such human cries, that the crew believing the ship to be full of devils, some of the best men, losing heart and head, went overboard in despair, and only two were left alive, at last, to tell the tale."

"And when," said old Sol. "when the *Polyphemus*——"

"Private West India Trader, burden three hundred and fifty tons, Captain, John Brown of Deptford, Owners, Wiggs and Co.," cried Walter.

"The same," said Sol; "when she took fire, four days' sail with a fair wind out of Jamaica Harbour, in the night——"

"There were two brothers on board," interposed his nephew, speaking very fast and loud, "and there not being room for both of them in the only boat that wasn't swamped, neither of them would consent to go, until the elder took the younger by the waist and flung him in. And then the younger rising in the boat, cried out, 'Dear Edward, think of your promised wife at home. I'm only a boy. No one waits at home for me. Leap down into my place!' and flung himself into the sea."

The kindling eye and heightened colour of the boy, who had risen from his seat in the earnestness of what he said and felt, seemed to remind old Sol of something he had forgotten, or that his encircling mist had hitherto shut out. Instead of proceeding with any more anecdotes, as he had evidently intended a moment before, he gave a short dry cough, and said, "Well, suppose we change the subject."

The truth was, that the simple-minded uncle in his secret attraction towards the marvellous and adventurous—of which he was, in some sort, a distant relation, by his trade—had greatly encouraged the same attitude in his nephew; and that everything that had been put before the boy to deter him from a life of adventure, had had the usual unaccountable effect of sharpening his taste for it. This is invariable. It would seem as if there never was a book written, or a story told, expressly with the object of keeping boys on shore which did not lure and charm them to the ocean, as a matter of course.

DICKENS: *Dombey and Son*.

### 31. *The Seafarer*

NOTHING heard I there save the howling of the sea,  
And the ice-chilled billow, whiles the crying of the swan!  
All the glee I got me was the gannet's scream,  
And the swoughing of the seal, 'stead of mirth of men;  
'Steard of the mead-drinking, moaning of the sea-mew . . .  
Wherefore now then crash together  
Thoughts my soul within that I should adventure  
The high streamings of the sea, and the sport of the salt waves!  
For a passion of the mind every moment pricks me on  
All my life to set a-faring; so that far from hence,  
I may seek the shore of the strange outlanders.  
Yes, so haughty of his heart is no hero on the earth,  
Nor so good in all his giving, nor so generous in youth,  
Nor so daring in his deeds, nor so dear unto his lord,  
That he has not always yearning unto his sea-faring,  
To whatever work his Lord may have will to make of him.  
For the harp he has no heart, nor for having of the rings,  
Nor in woman is his weal, in the world he's no delight,  
Nor in anything whatever save the tossing o'er the waves!  
O for ever he has longing who is urged towards the sea.  
Trees ribbon with blossoms, burghs are fair again,



Winsome are the wide plains, and the world is gay—  
All doth only challenge the impassioned heart  
Of his courage to the voyage, whosoever thus bethinks him,  
O'er the ocean billows, far away to go.

Translation from the Anglo-Saxon by STOPFORD BROOK.

### 32. *Dr. Johnson's Views*

#### I

I AGAIN visited him on Monday. He took occasion to enlarge, as he often did, upon the wretchedness of a sea-life. "A ship is worse than a jail. There is, in a jail, better air, better company, better conveniency of every kind; and a ship has the additional disadvantage of being in danger. When men come to like a sea-life, they are not fit to live on land."—"Then," said I, "it would be cruel in a father to breed his son to the sea." JOHNSON: "It would be cruel in a father who thinks as I do. Men go to sea before they know of the unhappiness of that way of life: and when they have come to know it, they cannot escape from it, because it is then too late to choose another profession."

#### II

We talked of war. JOHNSON: "Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been at sea."

BOSWELL: "Lord Mansfield does not." JOHNSON: "Sir, if Lord Mansfield were in a company of general officers and admirals who have been in service, he would shrink; he'd wish to creep under the table. . . . Sir, the impression is universal: yet it is strange. As to the sailor, when you look down from the quarter-deck to the space below, you see the utmost extremity of human misery; such crowding, such filth, such stench!" BOSWELL: "Yet sailors are happy." JOHNSON: "They are happy as brutes are happy, with a piece of fresh meat,—with the grossest sensuality. But Sir, the profession of soldiers and sailors has the dignity of danger. Mankind reverences those who have got over fear, which is so general a

weakness." SCOTT: "But is not courage mechanical, and to be acquired?" JOHNSON: "Why yes, Sir, in a collective sense. Soldiers consider themselves only as part of a great machine." SCOTT: "We find people fond of being sailors." JOHNSON: "I cannot account for that, any more than I can account for other strange perversions of imagination."

BOSWELL: *Life of Johnson.*

### 33. *The Press Gang*

#### I

As for my own part I saw no resource but the army or navy, between which I hesitated so long, that I found myself reduced to a starving condition.

My spirit began to accommodate itself to my beggarly fate, and I became so mean as to go down towards Wapping, with an intention to enquire for an old school-fellow who, I understood, had got the command of a small coasting vessel, then in the river, and implore his assistance. But my destiny prevented this abject piece of behaviour; for as I crossed Tower wharf, a squat, tawny fellow, with a hanger by his side, and a cudgel in his hand, came up to me, calling, "Yo, ho! brother, you must come along with me." As I did not like his appearance, instead of answering his salutation, I quickened my pace, in hope of ridding myself of his company; upon which he whistled aloud, and immediately another sailor appeared before me, who laid hold of me by the collar, and began to drag me along.

Not being of a humour to relish such treatment, I disengaged myself from the assailant, and with one blow of my cudgel laid him motionless on the ground; and perceiving myself surrounded in a trice by ten or a dozen more, exerted myself with such dexterity and success, that some of my opponents were fain to attack me with drawn cutlasses; and after an obstinate engagement, in which I received a large wound on my head, and another on my left cheek, I was disarmed, taken prisoner, and carried on board a pressing tender; where, after being pinioned like a malefactor, I was thrust

into the hold, among a parcel of miserable wretches, the sight of whom well nigh distracted me.

As the commanding officer had not humanity enough to order my wounds to be dressed, and I could not use my own hands, I desired one of my fellow-captives who was unfettered, to take a handkerchief out of my pocket and tie it round my head, to stop the bleeding. He pulled out my handkerchief, 'tis true; but instead of applying it to the use for which I designed it, went to the grating of the hatch-way, and, with astonishing composure, sold it before my face to a bum-boat woman, then on board, for a quart of gin, with which he treated his companions, regardless of my circumstances and entreaties.

I complained bitterly of this robbery to the midshipman on deck, telling him at the same time that unless my hurts were dressed I should bleed to death. But compassion was a weakness of which no man can justly accuse this person, who, squirting a mouthful of dissolved tobacco upon me through the gratings, told me, "I was a mutinous dog, and that I might die and be damned." Finding there was no other remedy, I appealed to patience, and laid up this usage in my memory, to be called at a fitter season.

In the meantime, loss of blood, vexation, and want of food, contributed, with the noisome stench of the place, to throw me into a swoon; out of which I was recovered by a tweak of the nose, administered by the tar who stood sentinel over us, who at the same time regaled me with a draft of flip, and comforted me with the hopes of being put on board of the *Thunder*, next day, where I should be freed of my handcuffs, and cured of my wounds by the doctor.

SMOLLETT: *Roderick Random*.

### 34. *The Press Gang*

#### II

I HAD observed, without discovering that it meant anything, for the last half hour, or longer, two well-dressed sailors, that is to say,

two clean, white-trowsered, neat blue abundant-button jacketed, glaze-hatted, long pig-tailed, mahogany-wainscoat-faced, quid-checked men, were our constant attendants; walking where we walked, and stopping as we stopped; admiring this fine ship, and that fine ship, as we admired them. But their admiration was conditional, a comparative and exceptive admiration, and mingled in it something which was like intended information to us, though not immediately addressed to us, it was talking at us, with some allusions to ships much larger, finer, and more beautiful than any there. Really I thought them very obliging. Go where we would the pig-tails swung in attendance on us. At length one said, "Are you looking for a ship, boys?" Well, thought I, this is a very civil, kind-hearted fellow, spite of his mahogany face. This put an end to all our trouble. "I thank you, yes: I should like to go on board of a ship." "Well, come along with us," said first pigtail's duplicate, "our ship is a gallow's deal finer than any you've seen yet, with a jolly good Captain too: he splices the main brace every week, and every time of close-reef topsails." "Ay," said pigtail the first, "and he'll order the *pusser's* steward to blow your kite out with lobscous and choke your luff with figgy-dowdy"—What splicing the main brace, and lobscous, and figgy-dowdy meant, I could not guess for the life of me; but as they were illustrations of the "jolly captain's" good qualities, there was a spell in the unintelligible jargon; (many with wiser heads than mine have been humbugged by such process); and with our guides, who, seeing we were strangers, kindly kept close to our elbows, we stepped lightly along, and entered a narrow street parallel with St. George's dock; several persons, as we passed, stood to look at us; and I noticed the shaking of heads, as if they meant, "Ah! something is wrong"; there seemed to be a compassion in it. "Look there," said one of the sailors. I did look '*There,*' as he pointed, and saw an immense white flag, with a large red cross on the field, and a jumble of smaller crosses in its corner, sweeping and swinging magnificently from a second-floor window, down almost to the pavement. Into the door of the house we passed; ascended a flight of stairs—our bodyguard regularly placed, one leading, the other bringing up the rear. We paused at the end

of the first flight, and the leader tapped with his knuckles twice, on what sounded door-like, and without waiting for an answer, opened the door just sufficiently wide to admit him *slippingly*, and it was instantly closed again. There was something in this which struck rather chillingly on my spirits, as we stood there in the dark passage. My friend George could not suppress his alarm, and he grasped my wrist hard, with a groan, "Oh," trying to draw me back, but I was afraid of being frightened:—I felt an instinctive certainty that we could not escape that way if we endeavoured to do so, and I was right, for at that moment I heard the stepping and scraping of feet on the stairs—there was nothing for us but to go on. The door was now drawn open, and our pigtailed leader looked over our heads to his comrade, then beckoned to us to "heave a-head"; we did so; there were three others of the same breed of animals as our guides, standing in the room, near a door which opened, as I supposed, to an inner apartment. . . . The guarded door opened, and my eye glanced on ranges of pistols and cutlasses suspended, and cutting Euclidisms and trigonometrics on the walls: this looked awful! A very handsome man, with an epaulette on each shoulder—an armless sleeve hanging from one—walked forward and seated himself on the leather chair. He smiled as he surveyed us both with a look which indicated anything but unkindness; and the bland manner in which he addressed us, captivated me. He civilly asked if we wished to go to sea. I answered "yes, sir"; George was silent; I was spokesman for both. Then followed the usual flummery about the honour of serving his majesty, fighting his enemies, promotion, brave fellows, glorious wooden walls, etc. "What is your age?" "Seventeen, Sir." "Seventeen!" "I shall be, Sir, if I live a little longer." "Ay, I dare say" . . . "Well, if you conduct yourself properly with diligence and sobriety, I do not question that you will make your way." "I'll try, Sir." At this stage of the business another personage entered and took the vacant chair, riveting his two great green glassy eyes on us; his whole face besides was a blank, but how those eyes seemed to grin! a tiger at his studies; and his light sandy hair stood bushily out like a wig of hemp, every thread of which had a quarrel with its neighbour. Between the

captain and this queer looking animal a half-muttered, half-hissed conversation ensued; the tiger was proposing something to which he of the epaulettes objected, and I gathered the words "*Tender*," "*the hold*," "*pair of scamps*," "*riff-raff*," to which the gentleman shook his head, and said, "No, no." I learned the meaning of all this soon; and Captain Mends, after twenty-five years, accept my thanks for your "No, no." A shilling was put into my hand, which I gave to one of the pigtails. My friend George received one also, and stood staring at it as it lay in his open palm. We had sold our bodies to the king, and to all others, his naval officers, to that tiger-gentleman inclusive.

C. R. PEMBERTON: *The Autobiography of Pel Verjuice* (1843).

### 35. *The Press Gang*

#### III

"T' FRIGATE as we'n heard tell on, as lying off Hartlepool, got tidings fra' t' tender as captured t' seamen o' Thursday; and t' *Aurora* as they ca'ed her, made off for t' nor'ard; and nine leagues off St. Abb's Head, t' *Good Fortune* [a Greenland whaler] see'd' frigate, and knowed by her build she were a man-o'-war, and guessed she were bound on king's kidnapping. I seen t' wounded man mysen wi' my own eyes; and he'll live! he'll live! Niver a man died yet, wi' such a strong purpose o' vengeance in him. He could barely speak, for he was badly shot, but his colour coome and went, as t' master's mate and t' captain telled me and some others how t' *Aurora* fired at 'em, and how t' innocent whaler hoisted her colours, but afore they were fairly run up, another shot coome close in t' shrouds, and then t' Greenland ship being t' windward, bore down on t' frigate; but as they knew she were an oud fox, and bent on mischief Kinraid (that's he who lies a-dying, only he'll noane die, a'se bound), the specksioneer [harpooneer], bade t' men go down between decks, and fasten t' hatches well, as he'd stand guard, he an' captain, and t' oud master's mate, being left upo' deck, for t' give a welcome just skin-deep to t' boat's crew fra' t'

*Aurora*, as they could see coming t'wards them o'er t' watter, wi' their reg'lar man-o'-war's rowing——"

"Damn 'em!" said Daniel, in soliloquy, and under his breath.

"Well! they coome on over t' watters wi' great bounds, and up t' sides they coome like locusts, all armed men; an' t' captain says he saw Kincaid hide away his whaling knife under some tarpaulin', and he knew he meant mischief, an' he would no more ha' stopped him wi' a word nor he would ha' stopped him fra' killing a whale. And when t' *Aurora*'s men were aboard, one on 'em runs to t' helm; and at that t' captain says, he felt as if his wife was kissed afore his face; but says he, "I bethought me on t' men as were shut up below hatches, an' I remembered t' folk at Monkshaven as were looking out for us even then; an' I said to myself, I would speak fair as long as I could, more by token of the whaling-knife, as I could see glinting bright under t' black tarpaulin'." So he spoke quite fair and civil, though he see'd they was nearing t' *Aurora*, and t' *Aurora* was nearing them. Then t' navy captain hailed him thro' t' trumpet, wi' a great rough blast, and, says he, "Order your men to come on deck." And t' captain of t' whaler says, his men cried up from under t' hatches as they'd niver be gi'en up wi'out bloodshed, and he sees Kinraid take out his pistol, and look well to t' priming; so he says to t' navy captain, "We're protected Greenland men, and you have no right t' meddle wi' us." But t' navy captain only bellows t' more, "Order your men t' come on deck. If they won't obey you, and you have lost the command of your vessel, I reckon you're in a state of mutiny, and you may come aboard t' *Aurora* and such men as are willing t' follow you, and I'll fire int' the rest." Yo' see, that were t' depth o' the man: he were for pretending and pretexting as t' captain could na manage his own ship and as he'd help him. But our Greenland captain were noane so poor-spirited, and says he, "She's full of oil, and I ware you of consequences if you fire into her. Anyhow, pirate, or no pirate" (for t' word pirate stuck in his gizzard), "I'm a honest Monkshaven man, an' I come fra' a land where there's great icebergs and many a deadly danger, but niver a press-gang, thank God! and that's what you are, I reckon." Them's the words he told me, but whether he

spoke 'em out so bold at t' time, I'se not so sure; they were in his mind for t' speak, only maybe prudence got t' better on him, for he said he prayed i' his heart to bring his cargo safe to t' owners, come what might. Well, t' *Aurora's* men aboard t' *Good Fortune* cried out "might they fire down t' hatches, and bring t' men out that a way?" and then t' specksioneer, he speaks, an' he says he stands ower t' hatches, and he has two good pistols, and summut besides, and he don't care for his life, bein' a bachelor, but all below are married men, yo' see, and he'll put an end to t' first two chaps as come near t' hatches. An' they say he picked two off as made for t' come near, and then, just as he were stooping for t' whaling knife, an' it's as big as a sickle——"

"Teach folks as don't know a whaling knife," cried Daniel. "I were a Greenland man mysel'."

"They shot him through t' side, and dizzied him, and kicked him aside for dead; and fired down t' hatches, and killed one man, and disabled two, and then t' rest cried for quarter, for life is sweet, e'en aboard a king's ship; and t' *Aurora* carried 'em off, wounded men, an' able men, an' all; leaving Kinraid for dead, as wasn't dead, and Darley for dead, as was dead, an' t' captain and master's mate as were too old for work; and t' captain, as loves Kinraid like a brother, poured rum down his throat, and bandaged him up, and has sent for t' first doctor in Monkshaven for to get t' slugs out; for they say there's niver such a harpooneer in a' t' Greenland seas; an' I can speak fra' my own seeing he's a fine young fellow where he lied there, all stark and wan for weakness and loss o' blood. But Darley's dead as a door-nail; and there's to be such a burying of him as niver was seen afore i' Monkshaven, come Sunday. And now gi' us t' iron, wench, and let's lose no more time a-talking."

MRS. GASKELL: *Sylvia's Lovers*.

### 36. *Stephano's Song*

THE master, the swabber, the boatswain and I,  
The gunner, and his mate,  
Loved Mall, and Meg, and Marian, and Margery.  
But none of us cared for Kate:



For she had a tongue with a tang,  
Would cry to a sailor, *Go hang*;  
She loved not the savour of tar nor of pitch,  
Yet a tailor might scratch her where'er she did itch;  
Then to sea, boys, and let her go hang.

SHAKESPEARE: *The Tempest*.

### 37. *Dirge*

FULL fathom five thy father lies,  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes:  
Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:  
Hark, now I hear them,—  
Ding, dong, bell.

SHAKESPEARE: *The Tempest*.

### 38. *Epitaph on Sir Francis Drake*

THE waves became his winding sheet; the waters were his tomb;  
But for his fame the ocean sea was not sufficient room.

ANON.

## PART III.—LIFE AT SEA

### 39. *Their Abode*

OTHERS may use the ocean as their road,  
Only the English make it their abode,  
Whose ready sails with every wind can fly,  
And make a cov'nant with th' inconstant sky;  
Our oaks secure, as if they there took root,  
We tread on billows with a steady foot.

EDMUND WALLER.

### 40. *Their Country*

SAILORS consider the sea as their country, and all true bred sons of Neptune as their foster-brothers. National prejudices are washed and rubbed off by the elements. In a ship intimacies are formed in an hour, which would require years on shore; and what is never done on land is freely done at sea, when shipmates share purses, and give more frankly than the nearest of kin lend—a word not in the vocabulary of a sailor. Sea-air ripens friendship quicker than the hot-bed of a city. Good fellowship, sincerity and generosity seem to have flown for refuge to the ocean.

TRELAWNY: *Adventures of a Younger Son.*

### 41. *The Tempest*

*Enter a Ship-master and a Boatswain*

MASTER. Boatswain!

BOATSWAIN. Here, master: what cheer?

MASTER. Good, speak to the mariners: fall to 't, yarely, or we run ourselves aground; bestir, bestir. [Exit

*Enter Mariners*

BOATSWAIN. Heigh my hearts! cheerly, cheerly, my hearts! yare, yare! Take in the topsail. Tend to the master's whistle. Blow, till thou burst thy wind, if room enough.

*Enter* Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Ferdinand, Gonzalo, and others

ALONSO. Good boatswain, have care. Where's the master? Play the men.

BOATSWAIN. I pray now, keep below.

ANTONIO. Where is the master, boatswain?

BOATSWAIN. Do you not hear him? You mar our labour: keep your cabins: you do assist the storm.

GONZALO. Nay, good, be patient.

BOATSWAIN. When the sea is. Hence! What care these roarers for the name of king?

GONZALO. Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

BOATSWAIN. None that I more love than myself. You are a counsellor; if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more; use your authority: if you cannot, give thanks that you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap. Cheerly, good hearts! Out of our way, I say.

[*Exit*

GONZALO. I have great comfort from this fellow: methinks he has no drowning mark upon him; his complexion is perfect gallows. Stand fast, good Fate, to his hanging: and make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage. If he be not born to be hanged, our case is miserable.

[*Exeunt*

*Re-enter* Boatswain

BOATSWAIN. Down with the topmast! yare! lower, lower! Bring her to try with main-course. (*A cry within*) A plague upon this howling! they are louder than the weather or our office.

*Re-enter* Sebastian, Antonio, and Gonzalo.

Yet again! what do you here? Shall we give o'er and drown? Have you a mind to sink?

SEBASTIAN. A pox o' your throat, you bawling, blasphemous, incharitable dog!

BOATSWAIN. Work you then.

ANTONIO. Hang, cur! hang, you insolent noisemaker! We are less afraid to be drowned than thou art.

GONZALO. I'll warrant him for drowning! though the ship were no stronger than a nutshell.

BOATSWAIN. Lay her a-hold, a-hold! set her two courses off to sea again; lay her off.

*Enter Mariners wet*

MARINERS. All lost! to prayers, to prayers! all lost!

BOATSWAIN. What, must our mouths be cold?

GONZALO. The king and prince at prayers! let's assist them. For our case is as theirs.

SEBASTIAN. I'm out of patience.

ANTONIO. We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards: This wide-chapp'd rascal—would thou mightst lie drowning The washing of ten tides!

GONZALO. He'll be hang'd yet,  
Though every drop of water swear against it  
And gape at widest to glut him.

(*A confused noise within: "Mercy on us!"—"We split, we split!"—"Farewell, my wife and children!"—"Farewell, brother!"—"We split, we split, we split!"*)

ANTONIO. Let's all sink with the king.

SEBASTIAN. Let's take leave of him.

[*Exeunt Antonio and Sebastian.*]

GONZALO. Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground, long heath, brown furze, any thing. The wills above be done! but I would fain die a dry death.

[*Exeunt.*]

SHAKESPEARE: *The Tempest*, Act i, Scene I.

## 42. Neptune's Raging Fury

or

### *The Gallant Seaman's Sufferings*

You gentlemen of England, that live at home at ease,  
Full little do you think upon the dangers of the seas;  
Give ear unto the mariners, and they will plainly show,  
The cares and the fears *when the stormy winds do blow.*

All you that will be seamen must bear a valiant heart,  
For when you come upon the seas you must not think to start,  
Nor once to be faint-hearted in hail, rain, or snow,  
Nor to shrink, nor to shrink, *when the stormy winds do blow.*

The bitter storms and tempests poor seamen must endure,  
Both day and night, with many a fright, we seldom rest secure;  
Our sleep it is disturbed with visions strange to know,  
And with dreams on the streams, *when the stormy winds do blow.*

In claps of roaring thunder which darkness both enforce,  
We often find our ship to stray beyond our wonted course,  
Which causeth great distraction, and sinks our hearts full low;  
'Tis in vain to complain, *when the stormy winds do blow.*

The lawyer and the usurer that sits in gown of fur,  
In closets warm, can take no harm, abroad they need not stir;  
When winter fierce with cold doth pierce, and beats with hail and  
snow,  
We are sure to endure *when the stormy winds do blow.*

We bring home costly merchandise, and jewels of great price,  
To serve our English gallantry with many a rare device;  
To please the English gallantry our pains we freely show,  
For we toyl and we moile *when the stormy winds do blow.*

We sometimes sail to the Indies to fetch home spices rare,  
Sometimes again to France and Spain for wines beyond compare,  
Whilst gallants are carousing in taverns in a row,  
Then we sweep o'er the deep *when the stormy winds do blow.*

If enemies oppose us, when England is at wars  
With any foreign nations, we fear not wounds nor scars;  
Our roaring guns shall teach 'em our valour for to know,  
Whilst they reel in the keel *when the stormy winds do blow.*

We are no cowardly shrinkers, but Englishmen true bred;  
We'll play our parts like valiant hearts, and never fly for dread;  
We'll ply our business nimbly, where'er we come or go  
With our mates, to the Straits, *when the stormy winds do blow.*

When we return in safety with wages for our pains  
The tapster and the vintner will help to share our gains;  
We'll call for liquor roundly and pay before we go,  
Then we'll roar on the shore *when the stormy winds do blow.*

BALLAD, c. 1635.

### 43. *A Hard Life at Sea*

I WAS always thinking that beggars had a far better life of it and lived better than I did, for they seldom missed their bellies full of better victuals than we could get; and also at night to lie quiet and out of danger in a good barn full of straw, nobody disturbing them, and might lie as long as they pleased; but it was quite the contrary with us, for we seldom in a month got our bellyfull of victuals, and that of such salt as many beggars would think scorn to eat; and at night when we went to take our rest, we were not to lie still above 4 hours, and many times when it blew hard were not sure to lie one hour, yea, often [we] were called up before we had slept half an hour and forced to go up into the maintop or foretop to take in our topsails, half awake and half asleep, with one shoe on and the other off, not having time to put it on; always sleeping in our clothes for readiness; and in stormy weather, when the ship rolled and trembled as though some great millstone were rolling up one hill and down another, we had much ado to hold ourselves fast by the small ropes from falling by the board; and being gotten up into the tops, there we must haul and pull to make fast the sail, seeing nothing but air above us and water beneath us, and that so raging as though every wave would make a grave for us; and many times in nights so dark that we could not see one another, and blowing so hard that we could not hear one another speak, being close to

one another; and thundering and lightning as though Heaven and earth would come together. . . .

So that I always said how happy were those men above us that lived at home in England and had the pleasures of the world to walk when and where they pleased; and all things at their wills, eating and drinking of the best, whilst we were suffering all manner of misery and extremities and only to keep them safe at home from foreign invasions and enemies.

*Barlow's Journal (1661). Ed. BASIL LUBBOCK.*

#### 44. *A Midshipman's Letter*

DEAR MOTHER

I hope you are all well at home and I am sure will be very glad to hear from me, but you were very near losing me the 10th of this month, for we were chased by the French Squadron and were very near being come up with, but we cut away two of our boats and one anchor and hove two or three hundred shot overboard. . . . We are all jolly and hearty thank God, but I believe the convoy are taken, though we saved ourselves. We was obliged to run for it. We depended on our sailing, she is a famous ship for sailing, not many ships can come up with her. We have had a Gale of wind that Blew hard enough only to permit us to carry two topsails close reefed, and a terrible sea on. I have not been sick but one day that I dined in the Gun-room where she rolled about very much. Captain Bouverie would have run the ship on shore if the *Agamemnon* had come within gun-shot of us, not knowing what she was, as we were close to Cape Finista. The Land was in sight, but we found out the *Agamemnon* by private signals. She made a private signal to us, and we answered it, she hoisted her number and we showed our number, and she hoisted the signal that she had some news of very great importance to communicate. So you see ships at sea can talk to one another a great way off. She would have sent us to England had not we sent a store-ship we had with us. We joined Lord Nelson on 13th, and we are now going to Malta with 150 casks of Dollars each

containing 5000. That is a good sum for the Soldiers at Malta; another frigate is going with us with as many Dollars on board. It is beautiful to see Lord Nelson's fleet. I hope I shall be able to give you more account of them when I have been longer with them. How are the rabbits and Ponto and Scug? I am able to stand a sailor's life, and I hope to conduct myself as an Officer in the British Navy. Do not fret about me, for if you cared no more for the french than I, you would care very little about them. Give my love to my Father Brothers and Sisters. Success to William and his rabbits.

Dear Mother I remain

Your ever affectionate Son

CHARLES NEWBOLT

H.M. Ship *L'Aimable*

October 15, 1805.

#### 45. *The Midshipman's Berth*

##### I

I FOLLOWED my new friend down the ladder, under the half deck, where sat a woman, selling bread and butter and red herrings to the sailors; she had also cherries and clotted cream, and a cask of strong beer, which seemed to be in great demand. We passed her, and descended another ladder, which brought us to the 'tween decks, and into the steerage, in the forepart of which, on the larboard side, abreast of the mainmast, was my future residence—a small hole, which they called a berth; it was ten feet long by six, and about five feet four inches high; a small aperture, about nine inches square, admitted a very scanty portion of that which we most needed, namely, fresh air and daylight. A deal table occupied a considerable extent of this small apartment, and on it stood a brass candle-stick, with a dip candle, and a wick like a full-blown carnation. The tablecloth was spread, and the stains of port wine and gravy too visibly indicated, like the midshipman's dirty shirt, the near approach of Sunday. The black servant was preparing for dinner, and I was



shown the seat I was to occupy. "Good Heavens!" thought I, as I squeezed myself between the ship's side and the mess-table; "and is this to be my future residence?—better go back to school; there, at least, there is fresh air and clean linen." . . .

The population here far exceeded the limits usually allotted to human beings in any situation of life, except in a slave ship. The midshipmen, of whom there were eight full grown, and four youngsters, were without either jackets or waistcoats; some of them had their shirt-sleeves rolled up, either to prevent the reception or to conceal the absorption of dirt in the region of the wristbands. The repast on the table consisted of a can or large black-jack of small beer, and a japan bread-basket full of sea-biscuit. To compensate for this simple fare, and at the same time to cool the close atmosphere of the berth, the table was covered with a large green cloth with a yellow border, and many yellow spots withal, where the colour had been discharged by slops of vinegar, hot tea, etc. etc.; a sack of potatoes stood in one corner, and the shelves all round, and close over our heads, were stuffed with plates, glasses, quadrants, knives and forks, loaves of sugar, dirty stockings and shirts, and still fouler table-cloths, small tooth-combs, and ditto large, clothes brushes and shoe brushes, cocked-hats, dirks, German flutes, mahogany writing-desks, a plate of salt butter, and some two or three pairs of naval half-boots. A single candle served to make darkness visible, and the stench nearly overpowered me.

MARRYAT: *Frank Mildmay*.

#### 46. *The Midshipman's Berth*

##### II

ON descending the hatch-way, I turned to view the main deck. Ye gods, what a difference! I had anticipated a kind of elegant house with guns in the windows; an orderly set of men; in short, I expected to find a species of Grosvenor Place, floating like Noah's Ark. Here were the tars of England rolling about casks, without jackets, shoes, or stockings. On one side provisions were received on board; at one port-hole coals, at another wood; dirty women, the objects of

sailor's affections, with beer cans in hand, were everywhere conspicuous; the shrill whistle squeaked, and the voice of the boatswain and his mates rattled like thunder in my ears; the deck was dirty, slippery, and wet; the smells abominable; the whole sight disgusting; and when I remarked the slovenly attire of the midshipmen, dressed in shabby round jackets, glazed hats, no gloves, and some without shoes, I forgot all the glory of Nelson, all the pride of the navy, the terror of France, or the bulwarks of Albion; and, for nearly the first time in my life, and I wish I could say it was the last, took the handkerchief from my pocket, covered my face, and cried like the child I was. . . .

How my first evening went I have, thank God, quite forgotten. I only remember that, about nine o'clock, Mr. M<sup>r</sup>Queen stuck a large fork in the table; instantly all the youngsters retired to bed. I remained, not understanding the hint; but I was shortly ordered to "obey signals and be off." I was conducted to my hammock; and never shall I forget my first sensations at undressing before company. I turned round like a lady in a squall, to avoid showing my legs; which could scarcely be dignified by that name at my tender age. At last I was unrigged, as the sailors say, and there I might have stood shivering and shaking like a dog in a wet sack, until this time, had not my friend taken me, like a child, in his arms, and placed me fair and square in my hammock. In endeavouring to get between the clothes I lost my balance, and out I went on the other side. I was instantly seized by a *lady*, who had some right to be in that part of the ship from her acquaintance with one of the midshipmen; placed properly in bed, tucked up, so as to defy balancing improperly; had a kiss, which savoured much of rum; and then was left, not in the dark, or entirely to my own reflections.

CHAMIER: *Life of a Sailor.*

## 47. Punishments

### I

FOR the regulateing and better Government of his Majesties Navies Ships of War and Forces by Sea wherein under the good Providence

and protection of God the Wealth Safety and Strength of this Kingdom is soe much concerned Bee it enacted . . .

Preamble to the Articles of War. 13 *Charles II. c.9.*

## 48. *Punishments*

### II

THE punishment of the capstein is when a capstein bar being thrust through the hole of the barrel, the offender's arms are extended at the full length cross-wise, and so tied unto the bar, having sometimes, a basket of bullets, or some other the like weight hanging by his neck; in which posture he continueth till he be either brought to confess some plot or crime, whereof he is pregnantly suspected; or that he hath received such condign suffering as he is censured to undergo, at the discretion of the captain. The punishment by the bilboes, is, when a delinquent is laid in irons, or in a kind of stocks that they use for that purpose; and which are more or less ponderous, as the quality of the offence is, that is proved against the offending patient. The ducking at the main yard arm is when a malefactor, by having a rope fastened under his arms and about his middle, and under his breech, is thus hoisted up to the end of the yard, from whence he is violently let fall into the sea, sometimes twice, sometimes three several times one after another; and if the offence be foul, he is also drawn underneath the very keel of the ship, the which they term keel-raking, and being thus under water, a great piece is given fire unto, right over his head, as well to astonish him the more with the thunder thereof, which proveth much offensive to him, as to give warning to all others to look out and beware. And these are the common and usual ways. . . . As for petty pilferings, and the like of that nature, they are generally punished with the whip (the offender being to that purpose made fast to the capstein); and the waggery and idleness of the ship's boys are paid by the Boat-swain with the rod; and commonly this execution is done upon the Munday mornings; and is so frequently in use that some meer seamen believe in earnest that they shall not have a fair wind unless

the boys be duely brought to the chest; that is, be whipped every Munday morning.

BOTELER'S *Dialogues*, c. 1635.

#### 49. *The Old Navy*

THE captain stood on the carronade—first lieutenant, says he,  
Send all my merry men aft here, for they must list to me:  
I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons—because I'm bred to the sea,  
That ship there is a Frenchman, who means to fight with we.  
Odds blood, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,  
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've gained the victory.

That ship there is a Frenchman, and if we don't take *she*,  
'Tis a thousand bullets to one, that she will capture *we*;  
I havn't the gift of the gab, my boys, so each man to his gun,  
If she's not mine in half an hour, I'll flay each mother's son.  
Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,  
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've gained the victory.

We fought for twenty minutes, when the Frenchman had enough,  
I little thought, said he, that your men were of such stuff;  
The captain took the Frenchman's sword, a low bow made to he,  
I havn't the gift of the gab, Mounsieur, but polite I wish to be.  
Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,  
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've gained the victory.

Our captain sent for all of us; my merry men, said he,  
I havn't the gift of the gab, my lads, but yet I thankful be;  
You've done your duty handsomely, each man stood to his gun,  
If you hadn't, you villains, as sure as day, I'd have flogged each  
mother's son.  
Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, as long as I'm at sea,  
I'll fight 'gainst every odds—and I'll gain the victory.

MARRYAT: *Snarleygyow*.

50. *The Smuggler*(Air: *The White Cockade*)

O my true love's a smuggler and sails upon the sea,  
 And I would I were a seaman to go along with he;  
 To go along with he for the satins and the wine,  
 And run the tubs at Slapton when the stars do shine.

O Hollands is a good drink when the nights are cold,  
 And Brandy is a good drink for them as grows old.  
 There is lights in the cliff-top when the boats are home-bound,  
 And we run the tubs at Slapton when the word goes round.

The King he is a proud man in his grand red coat,  
 But I do love a smuggler in a little fishing-boat;  
 For he runs the Mallins lace and he spends his money free,  
 And I would I were a seaman to go along with he.

ANON.

51. *The Sailor Laddie*

My love has been in London city,  
 My love has been at Port Mahon,  
 My love is away at Greenland,  
 I hope he will come back again.

*Oh! my bonny sailor laddie,*

*Oh! my bonny sailor, he,*

*Well I love my sailor laddie,*

*Blythe and merry may he be.*

Grenland altho' it is no city,  
 Yet it is a bonny place,  
 Soon he will come back to England,  
 There to court his bonny lass.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

Fisher lads go to the fishing,  
Bonny lasses to the braes,  
Fisher lads come home at even,  
Tell how their fishing goes.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

Sailor lads come home at even,  
Casting off their tarry clothes.  
Calling for their own true lovers,  
And telling how their trading goes.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

Sailor lads has gold and silver,  
Fisher lads has nought but brass,  
Well I love my sailor laddie,  
Because I am a sailor's lass.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

Our noble Captain's gone to London,  
Oh! preserve them from the press,  
Send him safely back to Terry,  
There to court his bonny lass.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

How can I be blythe and merry,  
And my true love so far from me,  
When so many pretty sailors,  
Are pressed, and taken to sea.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

When my love, he was in Terry,  
He came and saw me once a night,  
But now he's pressed to the *St. Ann's*  
And is kept quite out of my sight.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

Oh! I wish the press was over,  
 And all the wars was at an end;  
 Then every bonny sailor laddie  
 Would be merry with his friend.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

Here has been so much disturbance,  
 Our sailor lads dare not look out,  
 For to drink with their own lasses,  
 Or to have a single rout.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

My love, he's a bonny laddie,  
 Blythe and merry may he be,  
 If the wars were at an end,  
 He would come and marry me.

*Oh! my bonny, etc.*

Come you by the Buoy and Nore,  
 Or come you by the Roperie,  
 Saw you of my love sailing,  
 Oh, saw you him coming home to me?

*Oh! my bonny sailor laddie,*

*Oh! my bonny sailor, he,*

*Well I love my sailor laddie,*

*And my sailor he loves me.*

ANON.

## 52. *Alternative Version*

A PARTY of soldiers assembled on the beach to escort them [French prisoners] to Forton prison, a lieutenant of the navy and several midshipmen also attending, when a *posse* of women rushed out of Rimes' "noted alley" and pointing to the soldiers, sang the following beautiful ditty:

Don't you see the ships a-coming :  
Don't you see them in full sail :  
Don't you see the ships a-coming  
With the prizes at their tail :  
Oh! my little rolling sailor,  
Oh! my little rolling he;  
I do love a jolly sailor,  
Blithe and merry might he be.

Sailors, they get all the money,  
Soldiers they get none but brass;  
I do love a jolly sailor,  
Soldiers they may kiss — —  
Oh! my little rolling sailor,  
Oh, my rolling he;  
I do love a jolly sailor,  
Soldiers may be damned for me.

Then, catching hold of the lieutenant and midshipmen, they began to hug and kiss them, and it was some time before they could get out of their clutches.

*Recollections of J. A. Gardner.*

53. *Verses from The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

THE ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the kirk, below the hill,  
Below the lighthouse top.

The sun came up upon the left,  
Out of the sea came he!  
And he shone bright, and on the right  
Went down into the sea.



Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon—  
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon. . . .

And now the Storm-blast came, and he  
Was tyrannous and strong;  
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,  
As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head,  
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,  
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,  
And it grew wondrous cold;  
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen;  
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—  
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around;  
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,  
Like noises in a swound! . . .

The Sun now rose upon the right:  
Out of the sea came he,  
Still hid in mist, and on the left  
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,  
But no sweet bird did follow,  
Nor any day, for food or play,  
Came to the mariner's hollo! . . .

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free:  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs,  
Upon the slimy sea. . . .

Alone, alone, all, all, alone,  
Alone on a wide, wide sea!  
And never a saint took pity on  
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie:  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on; and so did I. . . .

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
Yet she sailed softly too:  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed  
The lighthouse top I see?  
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?  
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour bar,  
And I with sobs did pray—  
"Oh let me be awake, my God!  
Or let me sleep away."

The harbour bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly was it strewn!  
And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
And the shadow of the Moon.

COLERIDGE.

#### 54. *An Island Paradise*

THE pinnacle came back with a Spaniard and four Indians, which were the people taken in the proa: and the Spaniard being immediately examined as to the produce and circumstances of this island

of Tinian [in the Marianas], his account of it surpassed even our most sanguine hopes. For he informed us that though it was uninhabited (which in itself, considering our present defenceless condition, was a convenience not to be despised), yet it wanted but few of the accommodations that could be expected in the most cultivated country. In particular, he assured us that there was plenty of very good water; that there was an incredible number of cattle, hogs, and poultry running wild on the island, all of them excellent in their kind; that the woods afforded sweet and sour oranges, limes, lemons, and coconuts, in great abundance, besides a fruit peculiar to these islands, which served instead of bread; that from the quantity and goodness of the provisions produced here, the Spaniards at Guam made use of it as a store for supplying the garrison; and that he himself was a serjeant of that garrison, who was sent hither with twenty-two Indians to jerk beef, which he was to load for Guam on board a small bark of about fifteen tun, which lay at anchor near the shore. . . .

Thus we were forced upon the most desirable and salutary measures by accidents which at first sight we considered as the greatest of misfortunes; for had we not been driven by the contrary winds and currents to the northward of our course (a circumstance which at the time gave us the most terrible apprehensions), we should, in all probability, never have arrived at this delightful island, and consequently we should have missed of that place where alone our wants could be most amply relieved, our sick recovered, and our enfeebled crew once more refreshed, and enabled to put again to sea. . . .

But though it was almost calm, and whatever vigour and spirit was to be found on board was doubtless exerted to the utmost on this pleasing occasion, when, after having kept the sea for some months, we were going to take possession of this little paradise, yet we were full five hours in furling our sails. It is true we were somewhat weakened by the crews of the cutter and pinnace which were sent on shore; but it is not less true that, including those absent with the boats and some negroes and Indian prisoners, all the hands we could muster capable of standing at a gun amounted to no

more than seventy-one, most of which too were incapable of duty except on the greatest emergencies. This, inconsiderable as it may appear, was the whole force we could collect in our present enfeebled condition from the united crews of the *Centurion*, *Gloucester*, and the *Tryall*, which, when we departed from England, consisted all together of near a thousand hands.

Narrative of Anson's Voyage Round the World, compiled by R. WALTER, Chaplain of His Majesty's Ship *Centurion* (1748).

### 55. Channel Crossings

#### I.—IN THE REIGN OF HENRY VI

MEN may leave all gamys  
 That saylen to seynt Jamys!  
 For many a man it gramys  
     When they begin to sail.  
 For when they have take the sea,  
 At Sandwhich, or at Winchelsea,  
 At Bristol, or where that it be,  
     Their hearts begin to fail.

Anon the māster commandeth fast  
 To his ship-men in all the haste,  
     To dress them soon about the mast,  
     Their tackling to make.  
 With "howe! hissa!" then they cry,  
 "What, howe, mate! Thou standest too nigh,  
 Thy fellow may not hale thee by";  
     Thus they begin to crake.

A boy or twain anon up styen,  
 And overthwart the sail-yard lyen;—  
 "Y how! taylia!" the remnant cryen,  
     And pull with all their might.

gramys = upsets.  
 crake = talk.

hissa = hoist away.  
 taylia = haul aft.

"Bestow the boat, boatswain, anon,  
That our pilgrims may play thereon;  
For some are like to cough and groan  
Ere it be full midnight."

"Hale the bowline! now, veer the sheet!—  
Cook, make ready anon our meat,  
Our pilgrims have no lust to eat,  
I pray God give them rest!"

"Go to the helm! what, howe! no near?"

"Steward, fellow, a pot of beer!"

"Ye shall have, sir, with good cheer,  
Anon all of the best."

"Y howe! trussa! hale in the brales!  
Thou halest not, by God, thou fails!  
O see how well our good ship sails!"

And thus they say among.

"Hale in the wartake!" "It shall be done."

"Steward! cover the board anon,  
And set bread and salt thereon,  
And tarry not too long."

Then cometh one and saith, "Be merry;  
Ye shall have a storm or a pery."

"Hold thou thy peace! thou canst not whery  
Thou meddlest wonder sore."

Thus meanwhile the pilgrims lie,  
And have their bowls fast them by,  
And cry after hot malmsey,  
"Thou help them for to restore."

And some would have a salted toast,  
For they would eat neither solde nor roast;  
A man might soon pay for their cost,  
As for one day or twain.

wartake = a warp.  
pery = squall.

wherry = manage a boat.  
solde = boiled.

Some laid their bookys on their knee,  
And read so long they might not see;  
"Alas! mine head will cleave on three!"  
Thus saith another certain.

Then cometh our owner like a lord,  
And speaketh many a royal word,  
And dresseth him to the high board,  
To see all thing be well.  
Anon he calleth a carpenter,  
And biddeth him bring with him his gear,  
To make the cabins here and there,  
With many a feeble cell.

A sack of straw was there right good,  
For some must lie them in their hood;  
I had as lief be in the wood,  
Without meat or drink;  
For when that we shall go to bed,  
The pump was nigh our beddes head,  
A man was as good as to be dead  
As smell thereof the stink!

PILGRIM BALLAD.

## 56. *Channel Crossings*

### II.—IN THE REIGN OF JAMES I

JONAS, I pity thee, and curse those men  
Who, when the storm raged most, did wake thee then.  
Sleep is pain's easiest salve, and doth fulfil  
All offices of death except to kill.  
But when I waked I saw that I saw not;  
Ay, and the sun, which should teach me, had forgot  
East, west, day, night; and I could only say,  
If the world had lasted, now it had been day.

Thousands our noises were, yet we 'mongst all  
Could none by his right name, but thunder, call.  
Lightning was all our light, and it rained more  
Than if the sun had drunk the sea before.  
Some coffin'd in their cabins lie, equally  
Grieved that they are dead, and yet must die;  
And as sin-burdened souls from grave will creep  
At the last day, some forth their cabins peep,  
And trembling ask, "What news?" and do hear so,  
As jealous husbands, what they would not know.  
Some, sitting on the hatches, would seem there  
With hideous gazing to fear away fear.

JOHN DONNE: *The Storm*.

### 57. Channel Crossings

#### III.—IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES II

*April 6.* In the afternoon, W. Howe and I to our violins, the first time since we came on board. In the evening, it being fine moonshine, I stayed late walking upon the quarter deck with Mr. Cuttance, learning some sea terms; and so down to supper and to bed.

*April 7.* This day about nine o'clock in the morning the wind grew high and we being among the sands lay at anchor. I began to be dizzy and squeamish. Before dinner my Lord sent for me down to eat some oysters, the best my Lord said that he ever ate in his life, though I have ate as good at Bardsey. After dinner, and all the afternoon I walked upon the deck to keep myself from being sick, and at last about five o'clock went to bed and got a caudle made me and sleep upon it very well.

*April 8. (Lord's Day).* Very calm again and I pretty well, but my head ached all day. About noon set sail. In our way I see many vessels and masts which are now the greatest guide for ships. We had a brave wind all the afternoon and overtook two merchantmen that overtook us yesterday going to the East Indies. This evening Major Willoughby, who had been here three or four days with



Mr. Pickering, went on board a ketch for Dunkirk. We continued sailing when I went to bed, being somewhat ill again, and Will Howe, the surgeon, parson, and Balty supped in the Lieutenant's cabin and afterwards sat disputing, the parson for and I against extemporary prayers, very hot.

*April 9.* We having sailed all night were come in sight of the Nore and South Forelands in the morning and so sailed all day. In the afternoon we had a very fresh gale, which I brooked better than I thought I should be able to do. This afternoon I first saw France and Calais, with which I was much pleased, though it was at a distance.

PEPYS: *Diary* (1660).

## 58. Channel Crossings

### IV.—IN THE REIGN OF GEORGE II

*Wednesday.*—A gale struck up a little after sunrising, which carried us between three and four knots, or miles an hour, We were this day at noon about the middle of the Bay of Biscay, when the wind once more deserted us, and we were so entirely becalmed, that we did not advance a mile in many hours. My fresh-water reader will perhaps conceive no unpleasant idea from this calm; but it affected us much more than a storm could have done; for as the irascible passions of men are apt to swell with indignation long after the injury which first raised them is over, so fared it with the sea. It rose mountains high, and lifted our poor ship up and down, backwards and forwards, with so violent an emotion, that there was scarce a man in the ship better able to stand than myself. Every utensil in our cabin rolled up and down, as we should have rolled ourselves, had not our chairs been fast lashed to the floor. In this situation, with our tables likewise fastened by ropes, the captain and myself took our meal with some difficulty, and swallowed a little of our broth, for we spilled much the greater part. The remainder of our dinner being an old lean, tame, duck, I regretted but little the loss of, my teeth not being good enough to have chewed it.

Our women, who began to creep out of their holes in the morning, retired again within the cabin to their beds, and were heard no more of this day, in which my whole comfort was to find, by the captain's relation, that the swelling was sometimes much worse. He did, indeed, take this occasion to be more communicative than ever, and informed me of such misadventures that had befallen him within forty-six years at sea, as might frighten a very bold spirit from undertaking even the shortest voyage. Were these indeed but universally known, our matrons of quality would possibly be deterred from venturing their tender offspring at sea; by which means our navy would lose the honour of many a young commodore, who at 22 is better versed in maritime affairs than real seamen are made by experience at sixty.

H. FIELDING: *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (1754).

### 59. Channel Crossings

#### V.—IN THE REIGN OF GEORGE III

"Now hang it!" quoth I, as I looked towards the French coast, "a man should know something of his own country too, before he goes abroad. And I never gave a peep into Rochester church or took notice of the dock at Chatham, or visited St. Thomas of Canterbury, though they all three laid in my way——"

"——But mine indeed is a particular case——"

So without arguing the matter further with Thomas à Becket, or any one else, I skipped into the boat and in five minutes we got under sail and scudded away like the wind.

"Pray, captain," quoth I, as I was going down into the cabin, "is a man ever overtaken by Death in this passage?"

"Why, there is not time for a man to be sick in it," replied he. "What a cursed liar! for I am as sick as a horse," quoth I, "already. What a brain!—Upside down!—Heyday! the cells are broke loose one into another, and the blood and the lymph and the nervous juices, with the fixed and volatile salts, are all jumbled into one

mass—Good God! every thing turns round in it like a thousand whirlpools—I'd give a shilling to know if I shan't write the clearer for it——”

Sick! Sick! Sick! Sick!——

——“When shall we get to land, captain?—They have hearts like stones.—O! I am deadly sick!—Reach me that thing, boy——”Tis the most discomfiting sickness. I wish I was at the bottom—Madam, how is it with you?”

“Undone! undone! un——O! sir——”

“What the first time?”

“No, 'tis the second, third, sixth, tenth time, sir——”

“Heyday!—what a trampling overhead!——Holloa! cabin boy! What's the matter?”

“The wind chopped about!”

“S'Death! Then I shall meet him full in the face.”

“What luck!—'tis chopped about again, master.”

“O the devil chop it——”

“Captain,” quoth she, “for heaven's sake, let us get ashore!”

STERNE: *Tristram Shandy*.

## 60. *On Board the Mayflower*

September 6 (1621).—These troubles being blown over, and now all being compact together in one ship, they put to sea again with a prosperous wind, which continued divers days together and was some encouragement to them. Yet, according to the usual manner, many were afflicted with sea-sickness.

And I may not omit here a special work of God's Providence. There was a proud and very profane young man, one of the seamen, of a lusty able body, which made him the more haughty. He would always be contemning the poor people in their sickness, and cursing them daily with grievous execrations, and did not let to tell them that he hoped to help to cast half of them overboard before they came to their journey's end, and to make merry with what they

had. And, if he were by any gently reproved, he would curse and swear most bitterly.

But it pleased God before they came half seas over, to smite this young man with a grievous disease, of which he died in a desperate manner and so was himself the first that was thrown overboard. Thus his curses light on his own head; and it was an astonishment to all his fellows; for they noted it to be the just hand of God upon him.

*Diary of Governor Bradford.*

### 61. *Seasick Admirals*

I CAN well excuse those whose courage failed them in contending with so inglorious an enemy as sea-sickness. I suffered from it in an extraordinary degree for two years, and even of late I had a very humiliating proof of continued liability to it. It was in making an official voyage from Plymouth to Pembroke dockyard on board the *Comet* steam vessel. After an active morning in the dockyard I embarked about 3 o'clock, with an appetite so keen that my first word of command on reaching the quarter-deck was "Let us have our dinner"; but I had scarcely washed my hands in the cabin when the heat of the vessel, the smell of the oil, and a heavy head-sea laid me on my beam ends as sick as a dog, while I heard my companions, two landsmen, praising the excellence of the beef-steak pie; and at the same moment some tender-hearted friend—oh, the wretch!—asked "Where is the Admiral?" giving an opportunity to a dirty little cabin boy to cry out, "Down below, sea-sick, sir." What an indignity! and I plead it as an excuse for the uncharitable epithets I bestowed on he who first applied the power of steam to naval purposes. I consider a steamer only another name for a stomach pump. There is the consolation, however, for sea-sick admirals that Nelson suffered from it to the very last.

*Journal of Sir T. Byam Martin.*

62. *Passage to India*

## I

BEING summoned to the Cuddy to breakfast, I had not been there five minutes when I turned deadly sick, was obliged to retire to my cot, from whence I scarcely stirred for ten days, during which I was in a very lamentable condition, straining so violently from having nothing in my stomach to throw up that I often thought I must, like my poor mother, die upon the ocean. Mr. Cowdie, the Surgeon, afterwards told me he for several days had been under serious alarm about me, considering me in imminent danger of bursting a blood vessel.

We had tempestuous weather through the Bay of Biscay, with a prodigious sea, but the wind being fair, our progress was rapid, of which the officers frequently told me by way of comfort, but so ill was I that it was actually indifferent to me what became of the ship, and I should verily, I believe, have heard with composure that she was sinking. This continued until we reached the Canaries, when Mr. Rogers, the Chief Mate, came into my cabin one morning soon after day broke, desiring I would get up and go on deck to see the land, to which I replied, as I really thought was the case, that I had not strength to enable me to do so. Whereupon Rogers (a rough, vulgar, swearing seaman, but as good a creature as ever lived) said, "Pooh! Pooh! Damn my eyes!" (a common phrase of his upon all occasions), "What blasted stuff and nonsense is this! Do you want to lay there and die? Come, come, get up, I say, and draw a mouthful of fresh air, which will cure you." Finding I did not seem disposed to take his advice, he without further ceremony cast off the lanyards of my cot, and down it came. I therefore had nothing left but to try and put on my clothes, Rogers sending his servant to assist me, and returning himself to help me upon deck.

WM. HICKEY: *Memoirs* (East Indiaman *Plassey*, 1769).

63. *Passage to India*

## II

HAVING made a bow to the Captain and the officers, whom I found upon the quarter-deck, or part between the main and mizzen masts, and glanced my eye, for a moment, upon the ship from head to stern, I inquired where my cabin was, when I was conducted down a ladder to it, on the lower or gun deck, not far from the stern, on the larboard side. Here, the port being shut, there was scarcely light enough for me to survey my new apartment. I soon found, also, that the ship had considerably more motion than was apparent from the boat, and that the relief which I felt on coming on board was of very short duration. For I was scarcely able to stand without laying hold of some fixed object. I also became exceedingly oppressed by a close suffocating air, and by a sickening offensive smell, to which I nothing know comparable, and can only designate it by its usual appellation on board—the *smell of the ship*. My head and stomach began to yield to this irresistible combination. I could hardly help returning to the deck to breathe a little pure air. It was necessary, however, that I should go to work below, and place my things in order before the ship should get under weigh, when I should doubtless become more unwell and helpless. I therefore made an effort, and looked about me as well as I could, and inquiring what berths, or bedplaces, were already engaged, I chose the one which I thought the best of those not yet taken. I next had my principal trunk tied or *lashed down* to the deck, close to the side of the ship and directly opposite my sleeping place. I made such further distribution of my things as the pitching of the ship and my giddiness would permit. There being, in all, seven passengers in this small cabin, six of the berths were arranged in two lines against the bulkhead or partition which formed the side of the room, and ran parallel to the ship's side, at the distance of about six feet—this being the cabin's width. The seventh bed occupied the further end of the cabin towards the stern; and had a small window above it, for the sake of giving light to a passage; from which it received, in return, most offensive smells. It was, on this account, the worst berth of the

whole set, though at first view it appeared to be the best, from being detached from the others and having no other above or below it.

T. TWINING: *Travels in India* (1824).

## 64. *Passage to India*

### III

NOTWITHSTANDING the utmost vigilance on the part of the captain, attachments will spring up amongst our young people on board, and fortunate may it be considered when these are confined to the single of both sexes.

*Life of Mrs. Sherwood* (1775-1851).

## 65. *Passage to India*

### IV

No situation can be more lively and agreeable than that of a young officer on board an Indiaman. Hope presents to his youthful mind a bright picture. The Captain and Officers of the ship are generally attentive and gentlemanly, and a large party of ladies and brother passengers sit down every day to excellent cheer, and exhilarating wines, at the cuddy table, while the evenings are spent in dancing on the quarter-deck, either to an organ or the ship's band. At the same time, the lee-side is occupied by the soldiers and their wives, whose unsophisticated steps form a ludicrous contrast to the graceful movements on the other quarter. Time flies, and his flight is unheeded amid the diversions found in music, books, drawing, backgammon, chess, and piquet. . . . Nothing was wanting but a few pretty girls, to make out a quadrille, or a love story; but it so happened that no Celia went to the land of husbands at this time, and our young adventurer therefore had no opportunity of losing his heart.

R. G. WALLACE: *Fifteen Years in India, or*

*Sketches of a Soldier's Life* (1822).

66. *Home Thoughts on Blockade*

It is a great comfort to me, banished as I am from all that is dear to me, to know that my beloved Sarah and her girls are well. Would to Heaven it were peace! that I might come, and for the rest of my life be blessed in their affection. Indeed, this unremitting hard service is a great sacrifice, giving up all that is pleasurable to the soul, or soothing to the mind, and engaging in a constant contest with the elements, or with tempers and dispositions as boisterous and intractable. Great allowance should be made for us when we come on shore; for being long in habits of absolute command, we grow impatient of contradiction, and are unfitted for the gentle intercourse of quiet life.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Tell me how do the trees which I planted thrive? Is there shade under the three oaks for a comfortable summer seat? Do the poplars grow at the walk, and does the wall of the terrace stand firm?

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

It gave me great pleasure to find by your last letters that you were so youthful and strong as to take walks, which I believe are past my ability. I shall never be able to contend with you in the field again. We are going on here in our usual way, watching an enemy who, I begin to suspect, has no intention of coming out, and I am almost worn down with impatience and the constant being at sea. I have devoted myself faithfully to my Country's service; but it cannot last much longer, for I grow weak and feeble, and shall soon only be fit to be nursed and live in quiet retirement; for, having been so long out of the world, I believe I shall be found totally unfit to live in it.

From *The Letters of Admiral Collingwood*.

67. *After the War*

WE have had nothing but gales of wind, but in the *Agamemnon* we mind them not: she is the finest ship I ever sailed in, and, were she



a seventy-four, nothing should induce me to leave her whilst war lasted; for not an hour this war will I, if possible, be out of active service; much as I shall regret being so long parted from you, still we must look beyond the present day, and two or three months may make the difference of every comfort, or otherwise, to our income. I hope we have many happy years to live together! and if we can bring £2,000 round, I am determined to purchase some neat cottage, which we should never have occasion to change. . . .

NELSON TO HIS WIFE: *January 17, 1795.*

### 68. *Up Channel*

FOR England, when, with fav'ring gale  
Our gallant ship up channel steer'd,  
And, scudding under easy sail,  
The high blue western land appear'd.  
To heave the lead the seaman sprung,  
And to the pilot cheerly sung,  
By the deep nine.

And bearing up to gain the port  
Some well known object kept in view;  
An Abbey-tow'r, an harbour fort,  
Or beacon, to the vessel true;  
While oft' the lead the seaman flung,  
And to the pilot cheerly sung,  
By the mark seven.

And, as the much-lov'd shore we near,  
With transports we behold the roof  
Where dwelt a friend or partner dear,  
Of faith and love a matchless proof:  
The lead once more the seaman flung,  
And to the watchful pilot sung,  
Quarter less five.

OLD SONG.

69. *Complaint of the Absence of her Lover being upon the Sea*

WHEN other lovers in arms across  
Rejoice their chief delight,  
Drowned in tears, to mourn my loss  
I stand the bitter night  
In my window, where I may see  
Before the winds how the clouds flee:  
Lo, what a mariner love hath made me!

And in green waves when the salt flood  
Doth rise by rage of wind,  
A thousand fancies in that mood  
Assail my restless mind.  
Alas, now drencheth my sweet foe,  
That with the spoil of my heart did go,  
And left me; but, alas, why did he so?

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY,  
in *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557).

70. *All at Sea*

To all you ladies now at land,  
We men at sea indite;  
But first would have you understand  
How hard it is to write;  
The *Muses* now, and *Neptune* too,  
We must implore to write to you.  
*With a fa, la, la, la, la.*

For though the *Muses* should prove kind,  
And fill our empty brain;  
Yet if rough *Neptune* rouse the wind,  
To wave the azure main,

Our paper, pen and ink, and we  
 Roll up and down our ships at sea.  
*With a fa, la, la, la, la.*

Then, if we write not by each post,  
 Think not we are unkind;  
 Nor yet conclude our ships are lost  
 By *Dutchmen*, or by wind:  
 Our tears we'll send a speedier way,  
 The tide shall bring them twice a day.  
*With a fa, la, la, la, la.*

The King, with wonder and surprise,  
 Will swear the seas grow bold;  
 Because the tides will higher rise,  
 Than e'er they did of Old;  
 But let him know it is our tears  
 Brings floods of grief to *Whitehall* stairs.  
*With a fa, la, la, la, la.*

Should foggy *Opdam* chance to know  
 Our sad and dismal story,  
 The *Dutch* would scorn so weak a foe  
 And quit their fort at *Goree*;  
 For what resistance can they find  
 From men who've left their hearts behind?  
*With a fa, la, la, la, la.*

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

And now we've told you all our loves,  
 And, likewise, all our fears,  
 In hopes this declaration moves  
 Some pity for our tears;  
 Let's hear of no inconstancy,  
 We have too much of that at sea.  
*With a fa, la, la, la, la.*

EARL OF DORSET (1665).

71. *Great Satisfaction*

THIS morning the King's Proclamation against drinking, swearing and debauchery, was read to our ship's companies in the fleet, and indeed it gives great satisfaction to all.

PEPYS: *Diary*, June 4, 1660.

72. *Victualling*

## I

ENGLISHMEN, and more especially seamen, love their bellies above everything else, and therefore it must always be remembered, in the management of the victualling of the navy, that to make any abatement of them in the quantity or agreeableness of their victuals, is to discourage and provoke them in their tenderest point, and will sooner render them disgusted with the King's service than any other hardship that could be put upon them.

PEPYS: *Minute Book*.

73. *Victualling*

## II

THE brewers have gotten the art to sophisticate beer with broom instead of hops, and ashes instead of malt, and (to make it look more lively) to pickle it with salt water, so that whilst it is new, it shall seemingly be worthy of praise, but in one month wax worse than stinking water. . . .

They that know how hot the Southern countries are in the summer time, and the bare allowance of a sailor, would not wish him to drink of stinking puddle to quench his thirst, or if they should they were dog-hearted men. Let me but ask you why our men are more subject to the small-pox, to calentures, and to that terror of sailors, the scurvy, than other nations? Look unto the Hollanders, who drink water, and thou shalt find them healthy and as fat as Hebe. On the other side, but cast an eye into our English ships, who

drink beer, and they look as mortally as a death's head with a bone in's mouth: they swallow the cause in their drink.

NATHANIEL KNOTT: *An Advice of a Seaman* (1634).

## 74. *Victualling*

### III

THAT Mariners in the King's Ships have frequently put their 24 hours' allowance of salt provisions into their tobacco boxes.

That seamen in the King's Ships have made buttons for their Jackets and Trowses with the Cheese they were served with, having preferred it, by reason of its tough and durable quality, to buttons made of common metal; and that Carpenters in the Navy-Service have made Trucks to their Ships' flagstaffs with whole Cheeses, which have stood the weather equally with any timber.

That the Flour in the King's Ships has been devoured by weevils, and become so intolerably musty, and cemented into such hard rocks, that the men have been obliged to use instruments, with all their feeble power, to break and pulverise it before they could make use of it, as though, in a comparative degree, they had been stubbing to pieces the ruins of an old fortification.

That their bread has been so full of large black-headed maggots and that they have so nauseated the thoughts of it, as to be obliged to shut their eyes to confine that sense from being offended before they could bring their minds into a resolution of consuming it.

That their beer has stunk as abominably as the foul stangant water which is pumped out of many cellars in London at midnight hour; and that they were under a necessity of shutting their eyes, and stopping their breath by holding their noses before they could conquer their aversion, so as to prevail upon themselves in their extreme necessities to drink it.

WILLIAM THOMPSON: *An Appeal to the Public . . . to prevent the Navy of England being supplied with pernicious Provisions* (1761).

75. *Victualling*

## IV

THE Sour Kroutt, the Men at first would not eat it, until I put it into practice—a method I never knew to fail with seamen—and this was to have some of it dressed every day for the Cabin Table, and permitted all the Officers, without exception, to make use of it, and left it to the Option of the men either to take as much as they pleased or none at all; but this practice was not continued above a Week before I found it necessary to put every one on board to an allowance; for such are the tempers and disposition of Seamen in general that whatever you give them out of the common way—altho' it be ever so much for their good—it will not go down, and you will hear nothing but murmurings against the Man that first invented it; but the moment they see their superiors set value upon it, it becomes the finest stuff in the world, and the inventor an honest fellow.

COOK: *Journal of the First Voyage.*

76. *Victualling*

## V

EVERY innovation whatever, tho' ever so much to their advantage, is sure to meet with the highest disapprobation from seamen. Portable soup and sour kroust were at first condemned by them as stuff not fit for human beings to eat. Few men have introduced into their ships more novelties in the way of victuals and drink than I have done, and indeed, few men have had the same opportunity or been driven to the same necessity. It has, however, in a great measure been owing to such little innovations that I have always kept my people, generally speaking, free from that dreadful distemper, the Scurvy.

COOK: *Journal of the Third Voyage.*

*77. Mutiny at Spithead*

WE, your petitioners, beg that your Lordships will take into consideration the grievances of which we complain, and now lay before you.

First, That our provisions be raised to the weight of sixteen ounces to the pound, and of a better quality; and that our measures may be the same as those used in the commercial code of this country.

Secondly, That your petitioners request your Honours will be pleased to observe, there should be no flour served while we are in harbour in any port whatever under the command of the British flag; and also, that there might be granted a sufficient quantity of vegetables of such kind as may be the most plentiful in the ports to which we go; which we grievously complain and lay under want of.

Thirdly, That your Lordships will be pleased seriously to look into the state of the sick on board His Majesty's ships, that they may be better attended to, and that they may have the use of such necessaries as are allowed for them in time of sickness; and that these necessaries be not on any account embezzled.

Fourthly, That your Lordships will be so kind as to look into this affair, which is nowise unreasonable; and that we may be looked upon as a number of men standing in defence of our country; and that we may in some wise have grant and opportunity to taste the sweets of liberty on shore, when in any harbour, and when we have completed the duty of our ship, after our return from sea; and that no man may encroach upon his liberty, there shall be a boundary limited, and those trespassing any further, without a written order from the commanding officer, shall be punished according to the rules of the navy; which is a natural request, and congenial to the heart of man, and certainly to us, that you make the boast of being the guardians of the land.

Fifthly, That if any man is wounded in action, his pay be continued until he is cured and discharged. . . .

It is also unanimously agreed by the fleet that, from this day, no

grievance shall be received, in order to convince the nation at large that we know when to cease to ask, as well as to begin, and that we ask nothing but what is moderate, and may be granted without detriment to the nation, or injury to the service.

Given on board the *Queen Charlotte*, by the  
delegates of the Fleet, April 18, 1797.

## 78. *Christmas Dinners*

### *December 1675*

25. Christmas day wee keepe thus. At 4 in the morning our trumpeters all doe flatt their trumpetts, and begin at our Captain's cabin, and thence to all the officers' and gentlemen's cabins; playing a levite at each cabine doore, and bidding good morrow, wishing a merry Christmas. After they goe to their station viz. on the poope, and sound 3 levites in honour of the morning. At 10 wee goe to prayers and sermon; text, Zacc. IX. 9. Our Captaine had all his officers and gentlmen to dinner with him, where wee had excellent good fayre: a ribb of beife, plumb-puddings, minct pies, etc. and plenty of good wines of severall sorts; dranke healths to the King, to our wives and friends; and ended the day with much civill myrth.

### *December 1678*

25. Good Christmas Day. Wee got to prayers at 10; and the wind roase of such a sudden, that I was forced (by the Captain's command) to conclude abruptly at the end of the Letany; and wee had no sermon. And soone after, by the carelessness of som, our barge at starne was almost sunk, but recovered. Wee had not so grate a dinner as was intended, for the whole fleete being in this harbour, beife could not be gott. Yet wee had to dinner an excellent rice pudding in a greate charger, a speciall peice of Martinmas English beife, and a neat's tounge, and good cabbage, a charger full of excellent fresh fish fryde, a douzen of woodcocks in a pye, which cost 15d., a couple of good henns roasted, 3 sorts of cheese; and last



of all, a great charger full of blew figgs, almonds, and raysings; and wine and punch gallore, and a douzen of English pippens.

The wind was so high all this night, that wee ever expected when it would have broake our cable or anchor. But the greatest losse wee yet sustayned was this; about 11 or 12 a clock our honest Lieutenent, Mr. Will. New, dyed, and left a mornfull ship's company behind him. Yesterday our Capt bought 3 Spanish hoggs; the ruffness of the weather made them so sea sick, that no man could forbear laughing to see them goe reeling and spewing about the decks.

*Diary of REV. HENRY TEONGE.*

### 79. *The Excellent Art of Navigation*

I THINK there be many hundreds in England that can in a farre greater measure and more excellent methode expresse the noble art of Navigation, and I am fully perswaded that our Countrie is not inferiour to any for men of rare knowledge, singular explication, and exquisite execution of Artes Mathematicke, for what Strangers may be compared with M. Thomas Digges Esquire, our Countryman the great Archemastric, and for Theoricall speculations to most cunning calculation, M. Dee and M. Thomas Heriotts are hardly to be matched: and for the mechanicall practises drawn from the Artes of Mathematicke, our Country doth yeelde men of principal excellencie, as M. Emery Mulleneux for the exquisite making of Globes bodies, and M. Nicholas Hellyar for the singularitie of portraiture have the praise of Europe, M. Baker for his skill and surpassing grounded knowledge for the building of Ships advantageable to all purposes, hath not in any nation his equall.

And now that I may returne to the painfull Seaman, it is not unknown to all nations of the earth, that the English goeth before all others in the practises of sailing, as appeareth by the excellent discovery of Sir Fraunces Drake in his passage through the straights of Magilane, which being then so rawly knowne, he could not have passed, unlesse he had been a man of great practise and rare resolution: so much I boldly say, because I have seene and tested the

frowardness of the place, with the great unlikelyhode of any pasage to be in that way.

I might here repeat the most valient and excellent attempts of Sir Hugh Willoughbie, Sir John Hawkins, Sir Humphry Gilbert, and your Lordships servant M. George Raymond, with divers others that have given most resolute attempts in the practises of Navigation, as well for the discovery as other execution, whereby good prooffe is made, that not only in the skill of Navigation, but also in the mechanickall execution of the practises of sayling, wee are not to be matched by any nation of the earth.

\* \* \* \* \*

But there is another knowledge of Navigation, which so farre excelleth all that is before spoken, or that hath hitherto been vulgarly practised, as the substance his shadow, or as the light surpasseth the thick obscured darknesse; and this sweete skill of sayling may well be called Navigation arithmetickall, because it wholly consisteth of Calculations, comprehended within the limit of numbers, distinguishing Corses not onely upon the points of the Compasse, but upon every degree of the Horizon and giveth the distance of any travers for the particular elevation of minutes; yea, and the lesse parts assure yourselfe: it giveth longitudes and latitudes to the minute, second, and third, in so great certaintie, as that by no other meanes the like can be performed; . . . the orderly practise whereof, to the best of my poore capacitie, I purpose to make known, if I may perceive my paines already taken to be received in good parte, which I distrust not but all honest Seamen and Pylots of reputation will gratefully embrace, onely in regard of my friendly good will towards them, for it is not in respect of my paines but of my love that I would receive favourable curtesie.

JOHN DAVIS: *The Seaman's Secrets* (1594).

### 80. *Another View*

THERE was an Officer in the Navy (as I was informed) who cursed and Damned the Man who should discover the longitude; thou

Old, Inveterate, Rusty, Musty, Filthy, Cankered, Carnal Devil, for cursing down on thy Marrow Bones (if thou hast any) and ask God Almighty's forgiveness for thy Sins, know that it is not in thy power to Damn any man's but thyself. . . .

E. HARRISON: *Idea Longitudinis* (1696).

### 81. *Log Line*

Now there be some that are very inquisitive to have a way to get the longitude, but that is too tedious for seamen, since it requireth the deep knowledge of astronomy, wherefore I would not have any man think that the longitude is to be found at sea by any instrument; so let no seaman trouble themselves with any such rule, but (according to their accustomed manner) let them keep a perfect account and reckoning of the way of their ship.

JOHN DAVIS: *The Seaman's Secrets* (1594).

### 82. *An Examination*

"You are the officer of the watch, sir. It is blowing fresh, and you are under double-reefed topsails and top-gallant sails. Mark that! The captain comes on deck and asks how the wind is. You make the proper response. He then puts his hand into his pocket and produces a small leather case. Mark that! He opens it and presents you with a cigar. Now, sir—quick!—which end would you put in your mouth? Quick! which end?"

The youngster instantly replied:

"The twisted end if a Havana, sir, and either end if a cheroot!"

"Right, by gad, sir! You have passed an excellent examination. You have presence of mind. I have no further questions to ask."

ADMIRAL MORESBY: *Two Admirals*.

### 83. *The Result*

THE admiral in command when I joined the fleet (1845) was Sir

William Parker—the most distinguished officer of the day and a veteran of the Glorious First of June (fought fifty-two years before). His captains also dated from the old war, and were wedded to the system to which, as they believed, the country owed its magnificent victories.

The officers, with few exceptions, were content to be practical seamen only. They had nothing whatever to do with the navigation of the ship or the rating of the chronometers. That was entirely in the hands of the master, and no other had any real experience of responsibility in the matter.

I may instance the case of a captain whose ship was at Spithead. He was ordered by signal to go to the assistance of a ship on shore at the back of the Isle of Wight. In reply, he hoisted the signal of "Inability: the master is on shore." "Are other officers on board?" he was asked. He answered "Yes"; and to the repeated order "Proceed immediately," he again hoisted "Inability," and remained entrenched in his determination until a pilot was sent to his assistance.

ADMIRAL MORESBY: *Two Admirals.*

#### 84. *The Navigation of the St. Lawrence*

AT 3 p.m. a French pilot was put on board of each transport, and the man who fell to the *Goodwill's* lot gasconaded at a most extravagant rate, and gave us to understand it was much against his inclination that he was become an English pilot. The poor fellow assumed great latitude in his conversation, said he made no doubt that some of the fleet would return to England, but they should have a dismal tale to carry with them; for Canada should be the grave of the whole army, and he expected, in a short time, to see the walls of Quebec ornamented with English scalps. Had it not been in obedience to the Admiral, who gave orders that he should not be ill used, he would certainly have been thrown overboard. At 4 p.m. we passed the Traverse, which is reputed a place of the greatest difficulty and danger between the entrance of the St. Law-

rence and Quebec: it lies between Cape Tourmente (a remarkably high, black-looking promontory) and the east end of Orleans on the starboard side, and the Isle Madame on the larboard. Off Orleans we met some of our ships of war at anchor. As soon as the pilot came on board today, he gave his directions for the working of the ship, but the Master would not permit him to speak; he fixed his Mate at the helm, charged him not [to] take orders from any person except himself, and, going forward with his trumpet to the forecabin, gave the necessary instructions. All that could be said by the Commanding Officer, and the other gentlemen on board, was to no purpose; the pilot declared we should be lost, for that no French ship ever presumed to pass there without a pilot. "Ay, ay, my dear," replied our son of Neptune, "but d—— me, I'll convince you that an Englishman shall go where a Frenchman dare not show his nose." The *Richmond* frigate being close astern of us, the Commanding Officer called out to the Captain, and told him our case; he inquired who the Master was, and was answered from the forecabin by the man himself, who told him he was old Killick, and that was enough. I went forward with this experienced mariner, who pointed out the channel to me as we passed, showing me, by the ripple and colour of the water, where there was any danger; and distinguishing the places where there were ledges of rock (to me invisible) from banks of sand, mud, or gravel. He gave his orders with great unconcern, joked with the sounding-boats who lay off on each side, with different-coloured flags for our guidance; and, when any of them, called to him, and pointed to the deepest water, he answered, "Ay, ay, my dear, chalk it down—a d——d dangerous navigation, eh? If you don't make a sputter about it, you'll get no credit for it in England, etc." After we had cleared this remarkable place, where the channel forms a complete zig-zag, the Master called to his Mate to give the helm to somebody else, saying, "D— me if there are not a thousand places in the Thames fifty times more hazardous than this; I am ashamed that Englishmen should make such a rout about it." The Frenchman asked me if the Captain had not been there before. I assured him in the negative, upon which he viewed him with great atten-

tion, lifting, at the same time, his hands and eyes to heaven with astonishment and fervency.

CAPTAIN JOHN KNOX: *Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America* (1769).

### 85. *A Lee Shore*

ABOUT nightfall Cape Finisterre was not far ahead—a bluff, brown, granite mountain, whose frowning head may be seen far away by those who traverse the ocean. The stream which poured round its breast was terrific, and though our engines plied with all their force, we made little or no way.

By about eight o'clock at night the wind had increased to a hurricane, the thunder rolled frightfully, and the only light which we had to guide us on our way was the red-forked lightning, which burst at times from the bosom of the big black clouds which towered over our heads. We were exerting ourselves to the utmost to weather the cape, which we could descry by the lightning on our lee, its brow being frequently brilliantly lighted up by the flashes which quivered around it, when suddenly, with a great crash, the engine broke, and the paddles, on which depended our lives, ceased to play.

I will not attempt to depict the scene of horror and confusion which ensued; it may be imagined, but never described. The captain, to give him his due, displayed the utmost coolness and intrepidity. He and the whole crew made the greatest exertions to repair the engine, and when they found their labour in vain, endeavoured, by hoisting the sails, and by practising all possible manœuvres, to preserve the ship from impending destruction. But all was of no avail; we were hard on a lee shore, to which the howling tempest was impelling us. About this time I was standing near the helm, and I asked the steersman if there was any hope of saving the vessel, or our lives. He replied, "Sir, it is a bad affair. No boat could live for a minute in this sea, and in less than an hour the ship will have her broadside on Finisterre, where the strongest man-of-war ever built must go to shivers instantly.—None of us

will see the morning." The captain, likewise, informed the other passengers in the cabin to the same effect, telling them to prepare themselves; and having done so, he ordered the door to be fastened, and none to be permitted to come on deck. I, however, kept my station, though almost drowned with water, immense waves continually breaking over our windward side and flooding the ship. The water casks broke from their lashings, and one of them struck me down, and crushed the foot of the unfortunate man at the helm, whose place was instantly taken by the captain. We were now close to the rocks, when a horrid convulsion of the elements took place. The lightning enveloped us as with a mantle, the thunders were louder than the roar of a mullion cannon, the dregs of the ocean seemed to be cast up, and in the midst of all this turmoil, the wind, without the slightest intimation, *veered right about*, and pushed us from the horrible coast faster than it had previously driven us towards it.

The oldest sailors on board acknowledged that they had never witnessed so providential an escape. I said, from the bottom of my heart, "Our Father—hallowed be Thy name."

GEORGE BORROW: *The Bible in Spain* (1843).

### 86. *The Wreck of the Wager*

IN the morning, about four o'clock, the ship struck. The shock received upon this occasion, though very great, being not unlike the blow of a heavy sea, such as in the series of preceding storms we had often experienced, or taken for the same; but we were soon undeceived by her striking again more violently than before, which laid her upon her beam-ends, the sea making a fair breach over her. Every person that now could stir was presently upon the quarter-deck; and many more even of those were alert upon this occasion, that had not showed their faces upon deck for above two months before; several poor wretches, who were in the last stages of scurvy, and who could not get out of their hammocks, were immediately drowned.

In this dreadful situation she lay for some little time, every soul on board looking upon the present minute as his last; for there was nothing to be seen but breakers all around us. However, a mountainous sea hove her off from thence; but she presently struck again, and broke her tiller. In this terrifying and critical juncture, to have observed all the various modes of horror operating according to the several characters and complexions amongst us, it was necessary that the observer himself should have been free from all impressions of danger. Instances there were, however, of behaviour so very remarkable, they could not escape the notice of any one who was not entirely bereaved of his senses; for some were in this condition to all intents and purposes; particularly one, in the raving despair brought upon him, was seen stalking about the deck, flourishing a cutlass over his head, and calling himself king of the country, and striking every body he came near, till his companions, seeing no other security against his tyranny, knocked him down. Some, reduced before by long sickness and the scurvy, became on this occasion as if petrified and bereaved of all sense, like inanimate logs, and were bandied to and fro by the jerks and rolls of the ship, without exerting any effort to help themselves. So terrible was the scene of foaming breakers about us, that one of the bravest men we had could not help expressing his dismay at it, saying, It was too shocking a sight to bear! and would have thrown himself over the rails of the quarter-deck into the sea, had he not been prevented; but at the same time there were not wanting those who preserved a presence of mind truly heroic. The man at the helm, though both rudder and tiller were gone, kept his station; and being asked by one of the officers if the ship would steer or not, first took his time to make trial by the wheel, and then answered with as much respect and coolness as if the ship had been in the greatest safety; and immediately applied himself with his usual serenity to his duty, persuaded it did not become him to desert it as long as the ship held together.

The scene was now greatly changed; for many who but a few minutes before had shown signs of despair, and were on their knees praying for mercy, imagining that they were not now in that immediate danger, grew very riotous, broke open every chest and



box that was at hand, stove in the heads of casks of brandy and wine, as they were borne up to the hatch-ways, and got so drunk, that some of them were drowned on board, and lay floating about the decks for some days after. Before I left the ship, I went down to my chest, which was at the bulk-head of the wardroom, in order to save some little matters, if possible; but whilst I was there the ship thumped with such violence, and the water came in so fast, that I was forced to get upon the quarter-deck again, without saving a single rag but what was upon my back. The boatswain, and some of the people, would not leave the ship so long as there was any liquor to be got at; upon which Captain Cheap suffered himself to be helped out of his bed, put into a boat, and carried on shore.

HON. JOHN BYRON: *Narrative of the Loss of the Wager* (1741).

### 87. *Hardships on the Voyage Home*

AFTER we came unto the sun [i.e. the equator], our dried Penguins began to corrupt, and there bred in them a most loathsome and ugly worme of an inch long. This worme did so mightily increase and devoure our victuals, that there was in reason no hope how we should avoide famine, but be devoured of these wicked creatures: there was nothing that they did not devoure, only yron excepted: our clothes, boots, shooes, hats, shirts, stockings: and, for the ship, they did so eat the timbers as that we greatly feared they would undoe us by gnawing through the ships side. Great was the care and diligence of our captaine, master, and company to consume these vermine, but the more we laboured to kill them the more they increased; so that at the last we could not sleepe for them, for they would eate our flesh and bite like Mosquitos. In this wofull case, after we had passed the Equinoctiall toward the North, our men began to fall sick of such a monstrous disease, as I thinke the like was never heard of: for in their ankles it began to swell; from thence in two dayes it would be in their breasts, so that they could not draw their breath, and then fell into their cods; and their cods and yardes did swell most grievously and most dreadfully to behold, so that they could neither stand, lie, nor goe. Whereupon our

men grew mad with griefe. Our captaine with extreme anguish of his soule was in such wofull case that he desired only a speedie end, and though he were scarce able to speake for sorrow, yet he perswaded them to patience, and to give God thanks, and, like dutifull children, to accept of his chastisement. For all this, divers grew raging mad, and some died in most lothsome and furious paine. It were incredible to write our misery as it was; there was no man in perfect health, but the captaine and one boy. The master being a man of good spirit with extreme labour bore out his griefe, so that it grew not upon him. To be short, all our men died except 16, of which there were but 5 able to moove. The captaine was in good health, the master indifferent, captaine Cotton and myselfe swolne and short winded, yet better than the rest that were sicke, and one boy in health; upon us 5 only the labour of the ship did stand. The captaine and the master, as occasion served, would take in and heave out to top sailes, the master only attended on the sprit-saile, and all of us at the capstan without sheats and tacks.

In fine, our miserie and weakness was so great, that we could not take in nor heave out a saile: so our top-saile and sprit-sailes were torne all in pieces by the weather. The master and captaine taking their turnes at the helme, were mightily distressed and monstrously grieved with the most wofull lamentation of our sick men. Thus, as lost wanderers upon the sea, the 11 of June, 1593, it pleased God that we arrived at Bear-haven in Ireland, and there ran the ship on shore.

Jane's narrative of the voyage of John Davis  
to the Straits of Magellan; in HAKLUYT.

### 88. *Evacuation from the Peninsula*

[*A division of the Rifles, under General Craufurd, made for Vigo in the retreat of 1809, while the remainder, under Sir John Moore, made for Coruña.*]

It is, indeed, astonishing how man clings to life. I am certain that had I lain down at this period, I should have found my last billet on

the spot I sank upon. Suddenly I heard a shout in front, which was prolonged in a sort of hubbub. Even the stragglers whom I saw dotting the road in front of me seemed to have caught at something like hope; and as the poor fellows now reached the top of the hill we were ascending, I heard an occasional exclamation of joy—the first note of the sort I had heard for many days. When I reached the top of the hill the thing spoke for itself. There, far away in our front, the English shipping lay in sight.

Its view had indeed acted like a restorative to our force, and the men, at the prospect of a termination of the march, had plucked up spirit for a last effort. Fellows who, like myself, seemed to have hardly strength in their legs to creep up the ascent seemed now to have picked up a fresh pair to get down with. Such is hope to us poor mortals! . . .

When I did manage to gain the seashore, it was only by the aid of my rifle that I could stand, and my eyes were now so dim and heavy that with difficulty I made out a boat which seemed the last that had put off.

Fearful of being left half blind in the lurch, I took off my cap, and placed it on the muzzle of my rifle as a signal, for I was totally unable to call out. Luckily, Lieutenant Cox, who was aboard the boat, saw me, and ordered the men to return, and, making one more effort, I walked into the water, and a sailor stretching his body over the gunwhale, seized me as if I had been an infant, and hauled me on board. His words were characteristic of the English sailor, I thought.

"Hollo there, you lazy lubber!" he said as he grasped hold of me, "who the h—ll do you think is to stay humbugging all day for such a fellow as you?"

The boat, I found, was crowded with our exhausted men, who lay helplessly at the bottom, the heavy sea every moment drenching them to the skin. As soon as we reached the vessel's side, the sailors immediately aided us to get on board, which in our exhausted state was not a very easy matter, as they were obliged to place ropes in our hands, and heave us up by setting their shoulders under us, and hoisting away as if they had been pushing bales of goods on board.

"Heave away!" cried one of the boat's crew, as I clung to a rope, quite unable to pull myself up, "heave away, you lubber!"

The tar placed his shoulder beneath me as he spoke, and hoisted me up against the ship's side; I lost my grasp of the rope and should have fallen into the sea had it not been for two of the crew. These men grasped me as I was falling, and drew me into the port-hole like a bundle of foul clothes, tearing away my belt and bayonet in the effort, which fell into the sea.

It was not very many minutes after I was on board, for I lay where the sailors had first placed me after dragging me through the port-hole, ere I was sound asleep. I slept long and heavily, and it was only the terrible noise and bustle on board consequent upon a gale having sprung up, that at length awoke me. The wind increased as the night came on, and soon we had to experience all the horrors of a storm at sea. The pumps were set to work; the sails were torn to shreds; the coppers were overset; and we appeared in a fair way, I thought, of going to the bottom. Meanwhile, the pumps were kept at work night and day incessantly till they were choked; and the gale growing worse and worse, all the soldiers were ordered below, and the hatches closed; soon after which the vessel turned over on one side and lay a helpless log upon the water.

In this situation an officer was placed over us, with his sword drawn in one hand, and a lantern in the other, in order to keep us on the side which was uppermost, so as to give the vessel a chance of righting herself in the roaring tide. The officer's task was not an easy one, as the heaving waves frequently sent us sprawling from the part we clung to, over to the lowermost part of the hold where he stood, and he was obliged every minute to drive us back.

We remained in this painful situation for, I should think, five or six hours, expecting every instant to be our last, when to our great joy, the sea suddenly grew calm, the wind abated, the vessel righted herself, and we were once more released from our prison, having tasted nothing in the shape of food for at least forty-eight hours. Soon after this we arrived in sight of Spithead, where we saw nine

of our convoy, laden with troops, which had been driven on shore in the gale.

After remaining off Spithead for about five or six days, one fine morning we received orders to disembark, and our poor feet once more touched English ground. The inhabitants flocked down to the beach to see us as we did so, and they must have been a good deal surprised at the spectacle we presented. Our beards were long and ragged; almost all were without shoes and stockings; many had their clothes and accoutrements in fragments, with their heads swathed in old rags, and our weapons were covered with rust; whilst not a few had now, from toil and fatigue, become quite blind.

Recollections of Rifleman Harris.

### 89. *A Transport in 1812*

At length dinner was announced, and I was invited, as the officer in charge of the seamen, to go down. The party in the cabin consisted of an old *gizzened* Major with a brown wig, and a voice melodious as the sharpening of a saw—I fancied sometimes that the vibration created by it set the very glasses in the steward's pantry a-ringing—three captains and six subalterns, every man of whom, as the devil would have it, played on the flute, and drew bad sketches, and kept journals. Most of them were very white and blue in the gills when we sat down, and others of a dingy sort of whitey-brown, while they ogled the viands in a most suspicious manner. Evidently most of them had but small confidence in their *moniplies*; and one or two, as the ship gave a heavier roll than usual, looked wistfully towards the door, and half rose from their chairs, as if in act to bolt. However, hot brandy grog being the order of the day, we all, landsmen and sailors, got on astonishingly, and numberless long yarns were spun of what “what’s-his-name of this, and so-and-so of t’other, did or did not do.”

MICHAEL SCOTT: *Tom Cringle's Log*.

90. *Salcombe Seaman's Flaunt*

A LOFTY ship from Salcombe came,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
She had golden trucks that shone like flame,  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

"Masthead, masthead," the captains hail,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
"Look out and round; d' ye see a sail?"  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

"There's a ship what looms like Beachy Head,"  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
"Her banner aloft it blows out red,"  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

"Oh, ship ahoy, and where do you steer?"  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
"Are you a man-of-war, or a privateer?"  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

"I am neither one of the two," said she,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
"I'm a pirate, looking for my fee,"  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

"I'm a jolly pirate, out for gold":  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
"I will rummage through your after hold,"  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

The grumbling guns they flashed and roared,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
Till the pirate's masts went overboard,  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

They fired shot till the pirate's deck,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
Was blood and spars and broken wreck,  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

"Oh do not haul the red flag down,"  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
"O keep all fast until we drown";  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

They called for cans of wine, and drank,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
They sang their songs until she sank,  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

Now let us brew good cans of flip,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
And drink a bowl to the Salcombe ship,  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

And drink a bowl to the lad of fame,  
    *Blow high, blow low, and so sailed we;*  
Who put the pirate ship to shame,  
    *On the bonny coasts of Barbary.*

ANON.

### 91. *Spanish Ladies*

FAREWELL, and adieu to you, fine Spanish ladies,  
Farewell and adieu to you, ladies of Spain!  
For we've received orders for to sail for old England,  
But we hope in a short time to see you again.

We'll rant and we'll roar like true British sailors,  
We'll rant and we'll roar across the salt seas,  
Until we strike soundings in the channel of old England;  
From Ushant to Scilly is thirty-five leagues.

Then we hove our ship to, with the wind at sou'-west,  
boys,

We hove our ship to, for to strike soundings clear;  
Then we filled the main topsail, and bore right away,  
boys,  
And straight up the Channel our course we did steer.

The first land we made it was calléd the Deadman,  
Next, Ramehead off Plymouth, Start, Portland and  
Wight;  
We sailed by Beechy, by Fairleigh, and Dungeness,  
And hove our ship to, off the South Foreland light.

Then a signal was made for the grand fleet to anchor,  
All in the Downs, that night for to meet;  
Then stand by your stoppers, let go your shank-painters,  
Haul all your clew-garnets, stick out tacks and sheets.

So let every man toss off a full bumper,  
Let every man toss off his full bowl;  
We'll drink and be jolly, and drown melancholy:  
So here's a good health to all true-hearted souls.

ANON.



## PART IV.—SEAMEN ASHORE AND AFLOAT

### 92. *The Shipman*

A SHIPMAN was ther, wonynge fere by west;  
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.  
He rood upon a rouncy, as he kouthe,  
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.  
A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he  
Aboute his nekke, under his arm adoun.  
The hooote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun;  
And certainly he was a good felawe.  
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he ydrawe  
Fro Burdeux-ward, whil that the chapman sleep.  
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.  
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,  
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.  
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,  
His stremes, and his daungers hym bisides,  
His herberwe, and his moone, his lodemenage,  
Ther nas noon from Hulle to Cartage.  
Hardy he was and wys to undertake;  
With many tempest hadde his berd been shake.  
He knew alle the havenes, as they were,  
Fro Gootlond to the cape of Fynystere,  
And every cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.  
His barge ycleped was the Maudelayne.

CHAUCER: *Prologue*.

(NOTE. Good felawe—a rascal.

Draughte of wyn—i.e. stolen from the Bordeaux merchant.

If that he faught—i.e. if he won he drowned his prisoners.

Herberwe—harbours.

Lodemenage—pilotage.

Cartage—probably Cartagena.

Gootland—probably Gotland off Sweden.

Britaigne—Brittany.

Maudelayne—A vessel of this name paid customs at Dartmouth in 1379 and 1391. In 1379 her master was George Cowntree; but Chaucer more probably knew Peter Risshenden, her master in 1391. Many Dartmouth seamen, notably the mayor, John Hawley, were involved in cases of piracy at that date; Risshenden (then in command of a balinger) and Hawley were both accused of the capture of three Breton vessels in 1386.)

### 93. *The Good Sea Captain*

CONCEIVE him now in a Man-of-war, with his letters of marque, well armed, victualled, and appointed, and see how he acquits himself.

The more power he hath, the more careful he is not to abuse it. Indeed, a Sea Captain is a King in the Island of a ship, supreme Judge, above appeal in causes civil and criminal, and is seldom brought to account in Courts of Justice on land for injuries done to his own men at sea.

He is careful in observing the Lord's day. He hath a watch in his heart, though no bells in a steeple to proclaim that day by ringing to prayers.

He is as pious and as thankful when a tempest is past, as devote when it is present: not clamorous to receive mercies, and tongue-tied to return thanks.

Escaping many dangers makes him not presumptuous to run into them.

In taking a prize he most prizeth the men's lives whom he takes; though some of them may chance to be Negroes or Savages. It is the custom of some to cast them overboard, and there is an end of them; for the dumb fishes will tell no tales. But the murder is not so soon drowned as the men. What! is a brother by half-blood no kin? A Savage hath God to his father by creation, though not the Church to his mother, and God will revenge his innocent blood. But our Captain counts the image of God nevertheless his image cut in ebony as if done in ivory, and in the blackest Moors he sees the representation of the King of heaven.

In dividing the gains he wrongs none who took pains to get them. Not shifting off his poor mariners with nothing, or giving them only the garbage of the prize, and keeping all the flesh to himself. In time of peace he quietly returns home, and turns not to the trade of Pirates, who are the worst sea-vermin, and the devil's water-rats.

His voyages are not only for profit, but some for honour and knowledge; to make discoveries of new countries imitating the worthy Peter Columbus. . . .

Our Sea Captain is likewise ambitious to perfect what the other began. He counts it a disgrace, seeing all mankind is one family, sundry countries but several rooms, that we who dwell in the parlour (so he counts Europe) should not know the outlodgings of the same house, and the world be scarce acquainted with itself before it be dissolved from itself at the day of judgement.

He daily sees and duly considers God's wonders in the deep.

THOMAS FULLER: *The Holy State*.

#### 94. *The Bad Sea Captain*

HE's a *Leviathan*, or rather a Kind of Sea God, whom the poor Tars worship as the *Indians* do the Devil, more through Fear than Affection; nay, some will have it, that he's more a Devil, than the Devil himself.

*Old Nick* has so much conscience, say they, as to allow all his Slaves their Hire, nay, lets them many times possess more than their due Dividend of Human Enjoyments: But this Ruler of the Roast, has so little Christian Honesty, as to force the Sailors not only to work, watch, and fight, but even to starve too, for his sole Advantage; puts them upon a thousand extra Services, and Works of Supererogation, and after sends them to the Devil for a Reward, if they but barely ask one.

His Extraction is not from the Dunghill, that's certain, for his

Dad, in a drunken Frolick, begot him at Sea; and thence comes his eager Inclination to Wine and Gunpowder ever after.

Though it's commonly said of him, that he's better fed than taught, yet he fully makes up the Poverty of his Education, with that of his Endowments; for he's commonly a man of many Talents; he relies far more upon these, than Book-Knowledge, and Accompts all literature very impertinent, that tends not directly to the doubling of a Penny.

The great Cabin is the *Sanctum Sanctorum* he inhabits; from this all Mortals are excluded by a Marine, with a brandish'd Sword, who guards this Bird of Paradise as watchfully as the Centries do the Geese in *St. James's Park*.

Sometimes a humble Supplicant is' admitted to the Threshold, usher'd in by the Barber, the Master of his Ceremonies; and while this poor Mendicant addresses him with Fear and Trembling this Son of *Boreas* (that he might not daunt the Creature too much) looks round and turns his Sternpost directly upon him.

It must be a great change of Weather indeed, when he deigns to walk the Quarter-deck; for such a Prostitution of his Presence, he thinks, weakens his Authority, and makes his Worship less reverenc'd by the Ship's Crew. . . .

Once in a Moon, he invites some Marine Lieutenant to taste of his Bounty; but the poor Gentleman finds his Dinner bestow'd rather as a Charity, than an honourable Entertainment; for upon his Entry, he finds him aforehand seated at Table, with as stiff an Air, as if he expected your coming to kiss his Toe, for no Pope on Earth can look greater. Down you sit along with this dumb God; who shews what ye are to do next, by first helping himself; if you won't follow, you may fast, for by *Neptune*, he won't assist you. Thus you may sit as mute as a Fish, or a Bawd at an Evening lecture, 'till his Worship has finish'd; and then he rises first; you may stay, or follow him if you please, but not into the Cabin, but upon Deck, and there you may walk and digest both your Meat and your Reception.

*The Wooden World Dissected, by A Lover of the Mathematicks*  
(i.e. NED WARD) (1706).

95. *Drake's Sermon at Port St. Julian*

NAY, soft, Master Fletcher I must preach this day myself, although I have small skill in preaching. Well, be all the company here, yea or not? Answer was made that they were all there. Then commanded he every ship's company severally to stand together, which was also done. Then said he, My masters, I am a very bad orator, for my bringing up hath not been in learning, but what so I shall here speak, let any man take good notice of what I shall say, and let him write it down, for I will speak nothing but I will answer for it in England, yea and before her majesty. . . .

Thus it is, my masters, that we are very far from our country and friends, we are compassed in on every side with our enemies, wherefore we are not to make small reckoning of a man, for we cannot have a man if we would give for him ten thousand pounds. Wherefore we must have these mutinies and discords that are grown amongst us redressed, for by the life of God it doth even take my wits from me to think on it; here is such a controversy between the sailors and the gentlemen, and such stomacking between the gentlemen and the sailors, that it doth even make me mad to hear it. But, my masters, I must have it left, for I must have the gentlemen to haul and draw with the mariners, and the mariners with the gentlemen. What, let us show ourselves all to be of a company, and let us not give occasion to the enemy to rejoice at our decay and overthrow. I would know him that would refuse to set his hand to a rope, but I know that there is not any such here; and as gentlemen are very necessary for government's sake in the voyage, so I have shipped them for that, and to some further intent, and yet though I know sailors to be the most envious people of the world, and so unruly without government, yet may I not be without them. Also if there be any here willing to return home let me understand of them, and here is the *Marygold*, a ship I can very well spare, I will furnish her to such as would return with the most credit I can give them, either to my letters or any way else; but let them take heed that they go homewards, for if I find them in my way I will surely sink them; therefore you shall have time to con-

sider hereof until to-morrow, for by my troth I must need be plain with you. I have taken that in hand that I know not in the world how to go through withal, it passeth my capacity, it hath even bereaved me of my wits to think on it.

From J. COOKE's narrative of the Voyage Round the World.

### 96. *A Mere Seaman*

Is a pitched piece of reason caulked and tackled, and only studied to dispute with tempests. He is part of his own provision, for he lives ever pickled. A fore-wind is the substance of his creed, and fresh water the burden of his prayers. He is naturally ambitious, for he is ever climbing; out of which as naturally he fears, for he is ever flying. Time and he are everywhere ever contending who shall arrive first; he is well-winded, for he tires the day, and outruns darkness. His life is like a hawk's, the best part mewed; and if he lives till three coats, is a master. He sees God's wonders in the deep, but so as rather they appear his play-fellows than stirrers of his zeal. Nothing but hunger and hard rocks can convert him, and then but his upper deck neither; for his hold neither fears nor hopes, his sleeps are but reprievals of his dangers, and when he wakes 'tis but next stage to dying. His wisdom is the coldest part about him, for it ever points to the north, and it lies lowest, which makes his valour every tide overflow it. In a storm it is disputable whether the noise be more his than the elements and which will first leave scolding; on which side of the ship he may be saved best, whether his faith be starboard faith or larboard, or the helm at that time not all his hope of heaven. His keel is the emblem of his conscience, till it be split he never repents, then no farther than the land allows him, and his language is a new confusion, and all his thoughts new nations. His body and his ship are both one burden, nor is it known who stows most wine or rolls most; only the ship is guided, he has no stern. A barnacle and he are bred together, both of one nature, and it is feared one reason. Upon any but a wooden horse he cannot ride, and if the wind blow against him he dare not. He swerves up

to his seat as to a sail-yard, and cannot sit unless he bear a flagstaff. If ever he be broken to the saddle, it is but a voyage still, for he mistakes the bridle for the bowline, and is ever turning his horse-tail. He can pray, but it is by rote, not faith, and when he would he dares not, for his brackish belief hath made that ominous. A rock or a quicksand plucks him before he is ripe, else he is gathered to his friends at Wapping.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY: *Characters*.

### 97. *Mere Seamen*

To say the truth, from what I observed in the behaviour of the sailors in this voyage, and in comparing with what I had formerly seen of them at sea and on shore, I am convinced that on land there is nothing more idle and dissolute; in their own element there are no persons near the level of their degree who live in the constant practice of half so many good qualities. They are for much the greater part masters of their business, and always extremely alert and ready in executing it without any regard to fatigue or hazard. The soldiers themselves are not better disciplined nor more obedient to orders than these while aboard; they submit to every difficulty which attends their calling with cheerfulness, and no less virtues than patience and fortitude are exercised by them every day of their lives.

FIELDING: *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*.

### 98. *Education of a Naval Officer*

THE role that a naval officer has to fulfil is a varied one; professional requirements are of great importance, but many other qualities are essential. In distant parts of the globe he has to represent his nation; and is often called upon to exhibit considerable diplomatic and social qualities. Essentially, therefore, his training should be

broad and liberal; and everything with a narrowing tendency should be avoided. His hands require training as much as his brain; and constant and early contact with men is essential to encourage self-reliance and command. His training should be a practical one. Judgement, perception, and initiative should be fostered, and care taken to avoid such studies as tend to constrict or fetter these qualities.

The general effect of education on character is not perhaps much studied; since success in specialities of learning carries with it qualities of character suitable to the prosecuting of those special duties. A profound study of mathematics or science carries with it habits of accuracy that are apt to stifle rapid judgement; and so it is with all educational subjects: some broaden; others, if too closely adhered to, tend to narrow it; but all have a direct influence on character.

In the Navy the first object in view is to give an officer a good general education, so as to enable him to fill his station in life; next to supply him with the knowledge of the theory and use of the ship on which he lives, and of the whole of its equipment; and, during the acquisition of this learning, to develop his aptness to command, and his initiative to its full extent, always taking care that theory is kept complementary to practice. Evidently the present-day and future naval officer must be a practical marine engineer; he lives in one vast machine; every day he handles machinery; he must be fed on mechanism and learn its details. But, on the other hand, he is not required to be an engine designer. Normally he has to work and repair engines, not design them. At the same time he must be, above all things, a seaman, and possess that peculiar knowledge which only wind and sea, dark nights and mists, can give—that peculiar appreciation of sea conditions which is the overwhelming difference between the sea-going and shore-going sailor.

Minute by Lord Fisher in 1902, quoted in ADMIRAL SIR  
REGINALD BACON's *Life of Lord Fisher of Kilverstone*.



99. *Character of Naval Officers*

SEA officers in general are too apt to be censorious. It is their misfortune to know little of the world and to be bred in seaport towns, where they keep company with few but themselves. This makes them so violent in party, so partial to those who have sailed with them, and so grossly unjust to others.

RODNEY.

100. *Requirements of a Naval Officer*

It is by no means enough that the officer of the Navy should be a capable mariner. He must be that, of course, but also a great deal more. He should be as well a gentleman of liberal education, refined manners, punctilious courtesy, and the nicest sense of personal honour.

101. *Phlegm*

"THE Admiral [Collingwood] spoke to me," observed Mr. Smith, his servant, "about the middle of the action of Trafalgar, and again for five minutes immediately after its close; and on neither occasion could I observe the slightest change from his ordinary manner. This, at the moment, made an impression on me which will never be effaced; for I wondered how a person whose mind was occupied with such a variety of important concerns, could, with the utmost ease and equanimity, inquire kindly after my welfare and talk of common matters as if nothing of consequence were taking place.

*Life and Letters of Admiral Collingwood.*

102. *Copy of Naval Courage*

HE then [after the Civil War] betook himself wholly to the sea; and quickly made himself signal there. He was the first man that declined the old track, and made it manifest that the science might

be attained in less time than was imagined; and despised those rules which had long been in practice, to keep his ship and his men out of danger; which had been held in former times a point of great ability and circumspection; as if the principal art requisite in the captain of a ship had been to be sure to come safe home again. He was the first man who brought the ships to contemn castles on shore, which had been thought ever very formidable, and were discovered by him to make a noise only, and to fright those who could rarely be hurt by them. He was the first that infused that proportion of courage into the seamen, by making them see by experience, what mighty things they could do, if they were resolved; and taught them to fight in fire as well as upon water: and though he hath been very well imitated and followed, he was the first that drew the copy of naval courage, and bold and resolute achievement.

Character of Blake in CLARENDON'S *History of the Rebellion*.

### 103. *Death of Sir Humfrey Gilbert*

BUT when he was entreated by the captain, master, and other his well-willers of the *Hind*, not to venture in the frigate, this was his answer: I will not forsake my little company going homeward, with whom I have passed so many storms and perils. And in very truth, he was urged to be so over hard, by hard reports given of him, that he was afraid of the sea, albeit this was rather rashness than advised resolution, to prefer the wind of a vain report to the weight of his own life.

Seeing he would not bend to reason, he had provision out of the *Hind* such as was wanting aboard his frigate. And so we committed him to God's protection, and set him aboard his pinnace, we being more than 300 leagues onward on our way home. . . .

Monday, the ninth of September, in the afternoon, the frigate was near cast away; yet at that time recovered; and giving forth signs of joy, the general sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried out unto us in the *Hind* (so oft as we did approach within hearing): *We are as near to heaven by sea as by land*. Reiterating the same

speech, well beseeeming a soldier, resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testify he was.

The same Monday night, about twelve of the clock, or not long after, the frigate being ahead of us in the *Golden Hind*, suddenly her lights were out, whereof, as it were in a moment, we lost the sight, and withal our watch cried, the general was cast away, which was too true. For in that moment, the frigate was devoured and swallowed up of the sea. Yet still we looked out all that night and ever after, until we arrived upon the coast of England, omitting no small sail at sea, unto which we gave not the tokens between us agreed upon, to have perfect knowledge of each other, if we should at any time be separated.

In great torment of weather and peril of drowning, it pleased God to send safe home the *Golden Hind*, which arrived in Falmouth, the 22nd day of September, being Sunday, not without as great danger escaped in a flaw, coming from the southeast, with such thick mist that we could not discern land, to put in right with the haven.

From the narrative by Mr. Edward Haie,  
gentleman, in HAKLUYT'S *Voyages*.

#### 104. *Sir Richard Grenville—a Foreigner's Impression*

THE 13 of September the said Armado arrived at the Island of Corvo, where the Englishmen with about sixteen ships as then lay, staying for the Spanish [Treasure] Fleet: whereof some of the most part were come, and there the English were in good hope to have taken them. But when they perceived the King's Army to be strong, the Admiral being the Lord Thomas Howard, commanded his Fleet not to fall upon them, nor any of them once to separate their ships from him, unless he gave commission so to do: notwithstanding the Vice Admiral Sir Richard Greenfield [Grenville] being in the ship called the *Revenge* went into the Spanish fleet, and shot among them, doing them great hurt, and thinking the rest of the company would have followed: which they did not, but left him

there, and sailed away: the cause why could not be known: which the Spaniards perceiving with seven or eight ships they boarded her, but she withstood them all, fighting with them at least 12 hours together, and sank two of them, one being a new double Fly boat, of 1,200 tons, and Admiral of the Fly boats, the other a Biscayan: But in the end by reason of the number that came upon her she was taken, but to their great loss: for they had lost in fighting, and by drowning above 400 men, and of the English were slain about a hundred, Sir Richard Greenfield himself being wounded in his brain, whereof afterwards he died. He was born into the ship called the *Saint Paul*, wherein was the Admiral of the fleet Don Alonso de Barsan [Bacan]: there his wounds were dressed by the Spanish Surgeons, but Don Alonso himself would neither see him, nor speak with him: all the rest of the Captains and Gentlemen went to visit him, and to comfort him in his hard fortune, wondering at his courage and stout heart, for he showed not any signs of faintness nor changing of colour. But feeling the hour of death to approach, he spake these words in Spanish: Here die I, Richard Greenfield, with a joyful and quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, that hath fought for his country, Queen, religion, and honour, whereby my soul most joyfully departeth out of this body, and shall always leave behind it an everlasting fame of a valiant and true soldier, that hath done his duty, as he was bound to do. [The following words do not appear in the original translation: "But my other companions have done as traitors and blood-hounds, and will their whole life be cursed for it and infamous in eternity."] When he had finished these words, he gave up the Ghost, with great and stout courage, and no man could perceive any true sign of heaviness in him.

This Sir Richard Greenfield was a great and rich Gentleman in England, and had great yearly revenues of his own inheritance; but he was a man very unquiet in his mind, and greatly affected to war: in so much as of his own private motion he offered his service to the Queen; he had performed many valiant acts, and was greatly feared in these Islands, and known of every man, but of nature severe, so that his own people hated him for his fierceness, for when

they first entered into the Fleet or Armado, they had their great sail in a readiness, and might possibly enough have sailed away: for it was one of the best ships for sail in England, and the Master perceiving that the other ships had left them, and followed not after, commanded the great sail to be cut, that they might make away: but Sir Richard Greenfield threatened both him, and all the rest that were in the ship, that if any man laid hand upon it, he would cause him to be hanged, and so by that occasion they were compelled to fight, and in the end were taken. He was of so hard a complexion, that as he continued among the Spanish Captains while they were at dinner or supper with him, he would carouse three or four glasses of wine, and in a bravery take the glasses between his teeth and crush them in pieces and swallow them down, so that often times the blood ran out of his mouth without any harm to him at all, and this was told me by divers credible persons that many times stood and beheld him.

LINSCHOTEN's *Itinerary* (English Translation, 1598).

### 105. *The Dead Admiral*

BEING invited to Sir Christopher Mings' funeral, I into church and there heard the service and stayed till they buried him and then out. And there met with Sir William Coventry who was there out of great generosity and no person of quality there but he, and went with him into his coach, and being in it with him there happened this extraordinary case.

About a dozen able, proper, lusty men came to the coach-side with tears in their eyes and one of them that spoke for the rest begun and says to Sir W. Coventry, "We are here a dozen of us that have long known and served our dead Commander Sir Christopher Mings, and have now done that last office of laying him in the ground. We would be glad we had any other to offer after him and in revenge of him. All we have is our lives; if you will please to get His Royal Highness to give us a fireship among us all, here is a dozen of us. Out of which choose one to be Commander and the

rest of us, whoever he is, will serve him and if possible do that that shall show our memory of our dead Commander and our revenge."

Sir W. Coventry was herewith much moved (as well as I who could hardly abstain from weeping) and took their names and so parted; telling me that he would move His Royal Highness, as in a thing very extraordinary, which was done.

PEPYS: *Diary*, June 13, 1666.

## 106. *The Battle of the Nile*

### I

*Vanguard, off the Mouth of the Nile, 3rd August, 1798.*

My Lord, Almighty God has blessed his Majesty's arms in the late battle by a great victory over the fleet of the enemy. I attacked at sunset on the 1st of August, off the mouth of the Nile. The enemy were moored in a strong line of battle for defending the entrance of the bay, flanked by numerous gunboats, four frigates, a battery of guns and mortars on an island in their van; but nothing could withstand the squadron which your Lordship did me the honour to place under my command. Their high state of discipline is well known to you; and with the judgements of the Captains, together with their valour, and that of the officers and men of every description, it was absolutely irresistible. Could anything from my pen add to the character of the Captains, I would write it with pleasure, but that is impossible. ["I had the happiness to command a band of brothers."—Nelson to Lord Howe, January 8, 1799].

I have to regret the loss of Captain Westcott of the *Majestic*, who was killed early in the action; but the ship continued to be so well fought by her first Lieutenant, Mr. Cuthbert, that I have given him an order to command till your Lordship's pleasure is known.

The ships of the enemy, all but their two rear ships, are nearly dismasted: and those two, with their frigates, I am sorry to say, made their escape; nor was it, I assure you, in my power to prevent them. Captain Hood most handsomely endeavoured to do it, but

I had no ship in condition to support the *Zealous*, and I was obliged to call her in.

The support and assistance I have received from Captain Berry cannot be sufficiently expressed. I was wounded in the head and obliged to be carried off the deck; but the service suffered no loss by that event: Captain Berry was fully equal to the important service then going on, and to him I must beg leave to refer you for every information relative to this victory. He will present you with the flag of the Second in Command, that of the Commander-in-Chief being burnt in *L'Orient*.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient servant, HORATIO NELSON.

To the Earl of St. Vincent, K.B., Commander-in-Chief.

## II

*At Sea, 16th September, 1798.*

THE Kingdom of the Two Sicilies is mad with joy: from the throne to the peasant, all are alike. According to Lady Hamilton's letter, the situation of the Queen was truly pitiable: I only hope I shall not have to be witness to a renewal of it. I give you Lady Hamilton's own words: "How shall I describe the transports of the Queen! 'tis not possible", she cried, kissed her husband, her children, walked frantic about the room, cried, kissed and embraced every person near her, exclaiming, 'O brave Nelson! O God bless and protect our brave deliverer! O Nelson! what do we not owe to you! O victor! saviour of Italy! O that my swollen heart could not tell him personally what we owe to him!'" You may judge, Fanny, of the rest: but my head will not allow me to tell you half; so much for that. My fag, without success, would have had no effect, but blessed be God for His goodness to me.—Yours, etc., HORATIO NELSON.

To Lady Nelson.

## III

ON quitting the *Foudroyant*, Lord Nelson received this letter from his barge's crew:—

MY LORD, It is with extreme grief that we find you are about to leave us. We have been along with you (though not in the same ship) in every engagement your Lordship has been in, both by sea and land; and must humbly beg of your Lordship to permit us to go to England, as your boat's crew, in any ship or vessel, or in any way that may seem most pleasing to your Lordship. My Lord, pardon the rude style of seamen, who are but little acquainted with writing, and believe us to be, my Lord, your ever humble and obedient servants, BARGE CREW OF THE *Foudroyant*. June 26, 1800.

107. *A Letter from the Lower Deck*

HONOURED FATHER,

This comes to tell you I am alive and hearty except three fingers; but that's not much, it might have been my head. I told brother Tom I should like to see a greadly battle, and I have seen one, and we have peppered the Combined rarely (off Trafalgar); and for the matter of that, they fought us pretty tightish for French and Spanish. Three of our mess are killed, and four more of us winged. But to tell you the truth of it, when the game began, I wished myself at Warnborough with my plough again; but when they had given us one duster, and I found myself snug and tight, I set to in good earnest, and thought no more about being killed than if I were at Murrell Green Fair, and I was presently as busy and as black as a collier. How my fingers got knocked overboard I don't know, but off they are, and I never missed them till I wanted them. You see, by my writing, it was my left hand, so I can write to you and fight for my King yet. We have taken a rare parcel of ships, but the wind is so rough we cannot bring them home, else I should roll in money, so we are busy smashing 'em, and blowing 'em up wholesale.



Our dear Admiral Nelson is killed! so we have paid pretty sharply for licking 'em. I never sat eyes on him, for which I am both sorry and glad; for, to be sure, I should like to have seen him—but then, all the men in our ship who have seen him are such soft toads, they have done nothing but blast their eyes, and cry, ever since he was killed. God bless you! chaps that fought like the devil, sit down and cry like a wench. I am still in the *Royal Sovereign*, but the Admiral (Collingwood) has left her, for she is like a horse without a bridle, so he is in a frigate that he may be here and there and everywhere, for he's as *cute* as here and there one, and as bold as a lion, for all he can cry!—I saw his tears with my own eyes, when the boat hailed and said my lord was dead. So no more at present from your dutiful son.

SAM.

*Royal Sovereign* (1805).

### 108. *Ramblin' Jack*

THE youngest Leut, my Mother's brother-in-law, came to see my poor mother in her Distress; and we four sons being all at home, he took a liking to me, being the most Mischeafyous and prety active. He wished to take me, but only he was afraid I was too young to goe to sea; but he said "Neck or Nothing"—if I lived, all would be well, and if were knocked on the head, thereair would be one short in the Family, but that I had a chance to live and make a brave man.

But my Mother was of opinyon I should breake my Kneck, as I was always Climeing and fightin'. But my Unkle said "Neck or Nothing." Soe I was fitted out and sent to the Randavoes, "The Black Boy and Trumpet," at St. Katharine's Stayers near Tower Hill, whereair he was Pressing. He received me with as kind a manner as if he had been my father, as yoal see in my other adventures, which proved all much to my advantage. Had I not been so thoughtless and negligent all my life I might have made a fortin and lived happily in my old Age; but I have always been a wander-

ing, unhappy Chap as makes the Old Saying—"a Rowling Stone never gathers Moss," which makes the old Vers proved by me.

"If youth did know whate Age doth Crave  
Manney a penny they would save."

But I was always for a short life and a Merry one.

*Journal of Capt. John Cremer (1700-1774).*

## 109. *Tom Bowling*

### I

HE was a strong-built man, somewhat bandy-legged, with a neck like that of a bull, and a face which you might easily perceive had withstood the most obstinate assaults of the weather. His dress consisted of a soldier's coat altered for him by the ship's tailor, a striped flannel jacket, a pair of red breeches japanned with pitch, clean grey worsted stockings, large silver buckles that covered three-fourths of his shoes, a silver-laced hat, whose crown overlooked the brims by about an inch and a half; a black bob wig in buckle, a check shirt, a silk handkerchief, a hanger, with a brass handle, guided to his thigh by a tarnished lace belt, and a good oak plant under his arm. Thus equipped, he set out with me for my grandfather's house. . . .

When we came into the judge's presence, my uncle, after two or three sea bows, expressed himself in this manner: "Your servant, your servant. What cheer, father?—what cheer? I suppose you don't know me.—mayhap you don't. My name is Tom Bowling; and this here boy, you look as if you didn't know him neither; 'tis like you mayn't. He's new rigged, i' faith: his cloth don't shake in the wind so much as it was wont to do. 'Tis my nephew, d'ye see?: Roderick Random—your own flesh and blood, old gentleman. Don't lag astern, you dog," pulling me forward.

SMOLLETT: *Roderick Random.*

110. *Tom Bowling*

## II

HERE, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,  
The darling of our crew;  
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,  
For death has broached him to.  
His form was of the manliest beauty,  
His heart was kind and soft,  
Faithful, below, he did his duty;  
But now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,  
His virtues were so rare;  
His friends were many and true-hearted,  
His Poll was kind and fair;  
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly,  
Ah, many's the time and oft!  
But mirth is turned to melancholy,  
For Tom is gone aloft.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,  
When He, who all commands,  
Shall give, to call life's crew together,  
The word to pipe all hands.  
Thus Death, who kings and tars despatches,  
In vain Tom's life has doff'd,  
For, though his body's under hatches,  
His soul has gone aloft.

CHARLES DIBDIN.

111. *Buccaneers in the South Seas*

TO THE GOVERNOR OF PANAMA—

If you refuse this last demand and thinke that the imprisonment of three or foure Englishmen is more advantageous to you

than the lives of soe many of your Countymen as are already and what else shall fall into our hands, then you may keep them and we will send you the heads of these for a beginning; and then doe our Countrymen the least hurt in their lives or bodyes and by the helpe of God wee will colour your Land Rivers and sea with Spanish blood of men women and children the whole time that wee remaine in these seas, turning our former Mercy into cruelty, shewing mercy nor giving quarter to any.

Wee will bring our ships near your walls that you may have the pleasure of seeing them [the Spanish prisoners] hanged at our yard armes.

Wee will make you know that wee are the Comanders of the whole South Seas, so consider what to choose for wee waite your sentence of life or death with impatience, if death you shall certainly have the heads by Monday morning.

From the Comanders of the whole South Seas. Feb. 22. 1685.  
(Captains Sawkins, Sharp, Coxon, etc.).

## 112. *Some Shipmates*

ON my introduction to my new shipmates I was shown down to the starboard wing berth. I had not long been seated before a rugged-muzzled midshipman came in, and having eyed me for a short time, he sang out with a voice of thunder: "Blister my tripes, where the hell did you come from? I suppose you want to stick your grinders (for it was near dinner time) into some of our *à la mode* beef"; and without waiting for a reply, he sat down and sang a song that I shall remember as long as I live. The first verse, being the most moral, I shall give.

A Duchess from Germany  
Has lately made her will;  
Her body she's left to be buried,  
Her soul to the devil in hell. . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

Our second assistant surgeon was another wet soul, and coming from the play half drunk went to sleep in an empty cask that was lying on Quigley's Wharf, when a squall of wind rolled the cask overboard and poor old Andrew Reardon would have been drowned, had it not been for the boat-keeper of the cutter. Old Andrew is now dead. He dearly loved grog, and when told that the new rum was a bad article he said he didn't care; if it fractured the brain it was all he wanted.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

Billy [Culmer] in person was about five feet eight or nine and stooped; hard features marked with smallpox; blind in an eye—and a wen nearly the size of an egg under his cheek bone. His dress on a Sunday was a mate's uniform coat, with brown velvet waist-coat and breeches; boots with black tops; a gold-laced hat, and a large hanger by his side like the sword of John-a-Gaunt. He was proud of being the oldest midshipman in the navy (for he had been in that capacity with Lord Hood in 1757, [1767?]) and looked upon young captains and lieutenants with contempt. Being on shore at Gosport on a Sunday in the above costume, he tried to get into a tavern when the people were at church, and was thundering at the door to no purpose, when the late Captain N. H. Eastwood of the Royal Navy happened to be passing at the time in plain clothes, made some observations on his conduct and said "Mr. Culmer, you are a disgrace to the service!" Billy at this jumped off the steps, and with his usual oath "Damn my two eyes"—though he had but one—"but I'll slit your gullet, you wa wa—," and with two or three desperate efforts to draw his sword, he at last succeeded, like Hudibras, in getting it out, and then gave chase to Eastwood, whose lean figure, moving like a ghost, had got the start and was fortunate enough to get into his own house just as Billy came up puffing and blowing and bellowing out, "Stop that lanky son of a—— till I make a razee of him."

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

Henry Foularton. Midshipman.

Dead. Very religious, and remarkably neat in his dress; but at last drank very hard, and died regretting that a keg of gin (alongside of him) should see him out, which was really the case.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

James Hall. Boatswain.

Dead. An infernal tyrant; a good sailor; a sycophant, a Hun, a Goth, a Vandal.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

Jackson Dowsing. Lieutenant.

Dead. All jaw and singing from morn till night.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

Alex. Mackenzie.

Dead. This man, when a midshipman, used to sneak after the lieutenants; when made a lieutenant, sneaking after the captains, and when a captain, was at his old tricks, sneaking after the admirals. Had he lived to be made a flag officer, he would have sneaked after the devil.

From the *Recollections* of JAMES ANTHONY GARDNER.

### 113. *A Brawl on the Quarter-Deck*

AT six this evening Captain Norris coming on board this ship, my Lord Hamilton, Captain Ley, Captain Wishart, and Captain Trevor were standing on the quarter-deck, and as Captain Norris came up, Lord Hamilton asked him if he had taken any more wine or brandy. The other answered No; upon which Captain Trevor asked the price of his claret, whether he might have any at 4 *li.* a hogshead. Norris said he would have 6 *li.* or salt water, and then Captain Ley said he would rather the prizes were ashore than he would give 6 *li.* the hogshead; upon which Captain Norris said he was a rascal that wished his prizes ashore; the other replied he was

a rascal if he called him so, and then Captain Norris struck Captain Ley and threw him over the gun, which Mr. Hopsonn hearing, as he and I were in my cabin, ran out, and upon inquiry found he (Norris) had hurt Captain Ley, and by the Admiral's directions ordered him to be confined, upon which Captain Norris drew his sword, and offered to stab Captain Ley, but Admiral Hopsonn holding his hand, ordered him to be disarmed, and confined in Mr. Rayney's cabin.

*Journal of Sir George Rooke: August 12, 1702.*

#### 114. *Gentleman Chucks*

HE was considered to be the *taughtest* (that is, the most active and severe) boatswain in the service. He went by the name of "Gentleman Chucks"—the latter was his surname. He appeared to have received half an education; sometimes his language was for a few sentences remarkably well chosen, but, all of a sudden, he would break down at hard work. He had a very handsome person, inclined to be stout, keen eyes, and hair curling in ringlets. He held his head up and strutted as he walked. He declared "that an officer should look like an officer, and *comport* himself accordingly." In his person he was very clean, wore rings on his great fingers, and a large frill to his bosom, which stuck out like the back fin of a perch, and the collar of his shirt was always pulled up to a level with his cheek bones. He never appeared on deck without his "persuader," which was three rattans twisted into one, like a cable; sometimes he called it his Order of the Bath, or his Trio juncto in uno; and this persuader was seldom idle. He attempted to be very polite, even when addressing the common seamen, and, certainly he always commenced his observations to them in a very gracious manner, but, as he continued, he became less choice in his phraseology. As a specimen of them, he would say to the man on the forecastle "Allow me to observe my dear man, in the most delicate way in the world, that you are spilling that tar upon the deck—a deck, sir, if I may venture to make the observation, I had the duty of seeing holy-

stoned this morning. You understand me, sir, you have defiled His Majesty's forecandle. I must do my duty, sir, if you neglect your's; so take that—and that—and that—(thrashing the man with his rattan)—you d——d haymaking son of a sea cook. Do it again, d——n your eyes, and I'll cut your liver out."

I remember one of the ship's boys going forward with a kid of dirty water to empty in the head, without putting his hand up to his hat, as he passed the boatswain. "Stop, my little friend," said the boatswain, pulling out his frill, and raising up both sides of his shirt collar. "Are you aware, sir, of my rank and station in society?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, trembling and eyeing the rattan.

"Oh, you are!" replied Chucks. "Had you not been aware of it, I should have considered a gentle correction necessary that you might have avoided such an error in future; but, as you *were* aware of it, why then, d——n you, you have no excuse, so take that—and that—you yelping, half-starved abortion! I really beg your pardon, Mr. Simple," said he to me as the boy went howling forward, for I was walking with him at the time, "but really the service is going to the devil."

MARRYAT: *Peter Simple*.

### 115. *Jack Larmour*

My kind uncle, the Hon. John Cochrane, accompanied me on board the *Hind* for the purpose of introducing me to my future superior officer, Lieutenant Larmour, O1, as he was more familiarly known in the service, Jack Larmour—a specimen of the old British seaman, little calculated to inspire exalted ideas of the gentility of the naval profession, though presenting at a glance a personification of its efficiency. Jack was, in fact, one of a not very numerous class, whom, for their superior seamanship, the Admiralty was glad to promote from the forecandle to the quarter-deck, in order that they might mould into shipshape the questionable materials supplied by parliamentary influence—even then paramount in the navy to a degree which might otherwise have led to disaster. Lucky was the commander who could secure such an officer for his quarter-deck.



On my introduction, Jack was dressed in the garb of a seaman, with marlinspike slung round his neck, and a lump of grease in his hand, and was busily employed in setting up the rigging. His reception of me was anything but gracious. Indeed, a tall fellow, over six feet high, the nephew of his captain, and a lord to boot, were not very promising recommendations for a midshipman. It is not impossible that he might have learned from my uncle something about a military commission of several years standing; [Before he was seventeen years old Cochrane had held a commission in the Horse Guards, as well as having his name on the books of the *Vesuvius*, *Carolina*, *La Sophie*, ships of war]; and this, coupled with my age and stature, might easily have impressed him with the idea that he had caught a scapegrace with whom the family did not know what to do, and that he was hence to be saddled with a "hard bargain."

After a little constrained civility on the part of the first lieutenant, who was evidently not very well pleased with the interruption to his avocation, he ordered me to "get my traps below." Scarcely was the order complied with, and myself introduced to the midshipman's berth, than I overheard Jack grumbling at the magnitude of my equipments. "This Lord Cochrane's chest? Does Lord Cochrane think he is going to bring a cabin aboard? The service is going to the devil! Get it up on the main-deck."

The order being promptly obeyed, amidst a running fire of such objurgations, the key of the chest was sent for, and shortly afterwards the sound of sawing became audible. It was now high time to follow my property, which, to my astonishment, had been turned out on the deck—Jack superintending the process of sawing off one end of the chest just beyond the keyhole, and accompanying the operation by sundry uncomplimentary observations on midshipmen in general, and on myself in particular. . . .

At the first moment of setting foot on board the *Hind* it had been my determination never to commit an act worthy of punishment; but it was equally the determination of Jack Larmour to punish me for my resolution the first time he caught me tripping. This was certain, for Jack was open and above board, and declared that "he

never heard of such a thing as a faultless midshipman!" For a long time he watched in vain, but nothing occurred more than to warrant his swearing twice as much at me as at any other of my mess-mates.

One day, when his back was turned, I had stolen off deck for a few minutes, but only to hear on my return the ominous words: "Mast-head, youngster!" There was no alternative but to obey. Certainly not cheerfully—for the day was bitterly cold, with the thermometer below zero. Once caught, I knew my punishment would be severe, as indeed it was, for my sojourn at the mast-head was protracted almost to the limit of human endurance, my tormentor being evidently engaged in calculating this to a nicety. He never mast-headed me again.

DUNDONALD: *Autobiography of a Seaman.*

### 116. *Prince William Celebrates*

OUR royal captain came of age at Placentia the 21st of August, 1786, and the occasion presented a strange scene. His Royal Highness lunched with the officers in the gunroom (now the ward-room), and the interchange of condescension on the one part and of love and loyalty on the other was so often plighted in a bumper that by one o'clock scarcely one of the company could give distinct utterance to a word. By some means, I know not how (it was no easy matter), his Royal Highness contrived to crawl up to the main-deck, no doubt with the adventurous hope of being able to reach his cabin; but in an instant he was recognised by the seamen, all nearly as drunk as himself, who with unfeigned, irresistible loyalty, mounted him on their shoulders and ran him violently from one end of the deck to the other. This was a most dangerous proceeding, for I am sure I may say that his head passed within an inch of the skids (beams) several times, and one blow at the rate they were going would inevitably have killed him. I was on the gangway at the time looking down at them, and seeing the danger, roared to

the men to stop, but all in vain. I then threw my hat upon them with all the force I could to draw attention, and I succeeded in getting the men to lower him in their arms, and by that means probably saved his life.

*Journal of Sir T. Byam Martin.*

### 117. *A Royal Visit*

A RED-LETTER day came when we were honoured with a visit from the young Queen. It is difficult for a generation that knew her only as the old Queen to comprehend the passion of romantic enthusiasm which her presence then inspired; but we felt it, and that day will be remembered while I live.

She came, slight, graceful, very royal in gesture and movement, her bright face glowing with interest and pleasure—the English Queen at home in her fleet. The thundering salutes and cheering over, she made a tour of the ship, escorted by our octogenarian admiral, upright and stately, but deaf as a post. I do not know that conversations with royalty are ever productive of much interest, but here we certainly made our fiasco.

“A fine ship this, admiral,” remarked Her Majesty, rising to the occasion with spirit.

The admiral heard nothing, but bent low with his hand to his ear. The Queen spoke louder.

“A very fine ship this, admiral.”

Again the tall figure bent almost double to the little figure at his side, and again with infinite good nature she repeated the compliment at the very top of her voice.

It was equally unavailing, and an uncomfortable pause followed, during which all within hearing quaked, and the admiral patiently awaited her pleasure. Captain Milne stepped quickly to his father’s side and interpreted sonorously, and at last the old warrior understood and grunted:

“Yes, Your Majesty, yes—a fine ship.”

MORESBY: *Two Admirals.*

118. *Jack Binnacle and Queen Victoria*

JACK BINNACLE, just come from sea,  
As jolly tar as ever could be,  
Hearing with many a joyous smile,  
That Queen Victoria ruled our isle,  
Weighed anchor for her palace soon,  
With honest ardour just in time,  
Declaring loudly, with a grin,  
That he'd have a shake at the Royal Fin.

*Chorus*

*Gaily push the grog about,  
With mirth we'll make each cabin shout  
Let pleasure everywhere be seen,  
Long life to Britain's youthful Queen!*

Away Jack Binnacle then sped,  
With natty hat upon his head,  
With slacks and jacket blue, so trim,  
No tar look'd half so well as him.  
With shiners too, his purse was stor'd,  
Besides, he had some grog aboard;  
He reached her palace gates with joy,  
Where loud he shouted—"Ship, Ahoy!"

The guards amazed, without delay,  
All sought to drive the tar away;  
"Avast! ye lubbers!" then he cries,  
And spits his quid into their eyes,  
"To see her Queenship, I've come afar,  
I know she'll not despise a tar;  
Because, don't ye see, don't make a fuss,  
Her uncle Bill was one of us."

In vain they tried to hinder Jack,  
He bolted into the palace, smack!  
Pass'd all the Yeomen on the stairs,  
And on to the state chamber steers.  
With wonder did each one him view,  
Jack hitch'd his slacks—cried "how d'ye do?  
All right I hope,—no harm I mean,  
I've come to see our Royal Queen."

The Courtiers did not like this rout,  
And would have put the Jack Tar out,  
But our good Queen with friendly glance,  
Desir'd our hero to advance,  
"What! are you Victoria?" Jack then cries,  
"Lord love your pretty twinkling eyes,  
Exactly like my Poll, that's flat,  
Only as how you're not so fat.

Avast!—my jaw I must belay,  
I hopes you'll pardon what I say,  
I sailed with your good uncle Bill,  
Whose memory I do honour still,  
So, as I've heard, you're Captain now,  
I thought I'd come and make my bow,  
And, as I have got lots of prog,  
Would your Queenship take a glass of grog?"

Our lovely Queen seemed to enjoy  
The joke, which did her guests annoy;  
For Queen Victoria, who can blame,  
Loves all her subjects just the same.  
Jack full an hour there did stay,  
Then cried, as he rose to go away,  
Poking a quid between his jaws,  
"I s'pose your Majesty never chaws?"

Then off went Jack, to the sign of the Ship,  
And ordered a galore of flip,  
Declaring loudly he did mean  
To swim in grog to the health of the Queen.  
Many a tar then joined hand,  
Cans were filled, hands grasp'd each hand,  
So then they shouted with much glee,  
"To Queen Victoria—three times three."

STREET SONG, c. 1837.

119. *The Mermaid*

ON Friday Morn as we set sail,  
And our ship not far from land,  
O there I spy'd a fair pretty maid  
With a comb and a glass in her hand.

*The stormy winds did blow,  
And the raging seas did roar,  
While we poor a sailors went to the top  
And the landlubbers lay below.*

Then up and spoke a boy of our gallant ship,  
And a well speaking boy was he,  
"I've a father and mother in Portsmouth town  
And tonight they will weep for me."

Then up and spoke a man of our gallant ship,  
And a well-speaking man was he,  
"I've married a wife in fair London town  
And tonight she a widow will be."

Then up and spoke the Captain of our gallant ship,  
And a valiant man was he,  
"For want of a boat we shall all be drowned,"  
For she sank to the bottom of the sea.

The moon shone bright, and the stars gave light,  
And my mother was looking for me,  
She might look and weep with watery eyes,  
She might look to the bottom of the sea.

Three times round went our gallant ship,  
And three times round went she,  
Three times round went our gallant ship,  
Then she sank to the bottom of the sea.

ORIGINAL VERSION.

### 120. *Jack Robinson*

THE perils and the dangers of the voyage past,  
And the ship at Portsmouth arrived at last,  
The sails all furled, and the anchor cast,  
The happiest of the crew was Jack Robinson.  
For his Poll he had trinkets and gold galore,  
Besides Prize Money quite a store,  
And along with the crew, he went ashore,  
As Coxswain of the boat, Jack Robinson.

He met with a man, and said, "I say,  
Perhaps you may know one Polly Gray?  
She lives somewhere hereabout"; the man said "Nay,  
I do not, indeed," to Jack Robinson.  
So says Jack to him, "I have left my ship,  
And all my messmates, they gave me the slip,  
Maybe you'll partake of a good can of flip?  
For you're a good sort of fellow," says Jack Robinson.

In a public house, then, they both sat down,  
And talked of Admirals of high renown,  
And drank as much grog as came to half a crown,  
This here strange man and Jack Robinson.

Then Jack called out the reckoning to pay,  
The landlady came in, in fine array,  
"My eyes and limbs, why here's Polly Gray!  
Who'd have thought of meeting here!" says Jack Robinson.

The landlady staggered against the wall,  
And said, at first, she didn't know him at all.  
"Shiver me," says Jack, "why here's a pretty squall,  
D—n me, don't you know me? I'm Jack Robinson!  
Don't you remember this handkerchief you giv'd me?  
'Twas three years ago, before I went to sea,  
Every day I've looked at it, and then I thought of thee,  
Upon my soul, I have," says Jack Robinson.

Says the Lady, says she, "I have changed my state."  
"Why! you don't mean," says Jack, "that you've got a mate?  
You know you promised——" Says she, "I could not wait,  
For no tidings could I gain of you, Jack Robinson;  
And somebody, one day, came up to me and said,  
That somebody else, had somewhere read  
In some newspaper, as how you were dead."  
"I've not been dead at all," says Jack Robinson.

Then he turn'd his quid, and finish'd his glass,  
Hitch'd up his trousers, "Alas! alas!  
That ever I should live to be made such an ass!  
To be bilked by a woman," says Jack Robinson.  
"But to fret and to stew about it's all in vain  
I'll get a ship and go to Holland, France and Spain,  
No matter where, to Portsmouth I'll ne'er come again,"  
And he was off before you could say, Jack Robinson.

T. HUDSON.



121. *Sweet William*

As I was walking along the shore  
Where the breezes blow cold and the billows do roar,  
A ship I spied on the proud swelling main  
That brought me my true love back to England again.

The boat came on shore and my true love did land  
With his tarpawling jacket and bundle in hand,  
Saying "Presents I've brought you from East and from  
West,  
Because you're the maiden that I love best.

I have shawls and rich laces and fine golden rings  
And rubies and pearls and fifty fine things;  
For since you've proved loyal and constant to me,  
I have come back to England to marry with thee."

Oh then round her fair neck his arms he did throw  
And glad tears of joy from her eyelids did flow,  
Saying "William, dear William, thou'rt welcome to me  
For many long months have I watched for thee.

O come my dear sailor, and let us begone,  
My father and mother are waiting at home  
To see my dear sailor how happy they will be,  
For they prayed for your safety while you were at sea."

"Then come, my dear girl, to the Church let's away,  
And we shall be wedded without more delay,  
I've riches in store, love, when thou art my wife  
To make us contented and happy for life."

OLD SONG.

122. *Ben Block*

BEN BLOCK was a veteran of naval renown,  
And renown was his only reward;  
For The Board still neglected his merits to crown,  
As no interest he had with my Lord.

Yet brave as old Benbow was sturdy old Ben,  
And he laughed at the cannon's loud roar;  
When the death-dealing broadsides made worm's meat of  
men,  
And the scuppers were streaming with gore!

Nor could a Lieutenant's poor stipend provoke  
The staunch tar to despise scanty prog;  
But his biscuit he'd crack, turn his quid, crack his joke,  
And drown care in a jorum of grog.

Thus year after year, in a subaltern state,  
Poor Ben for his King fought and bled,  
Till time had unroof'd all his thatch from his pate,  
And the hair from his temples had fled!

When on humbly saluting with *sinciput* bare,  
The first Lord of Admiralty once;  
Says his Lordship "Lieutenant, you've lost all your hair,  
Since I last had a peep at your sconce."

"Why, my Lord," replied Ben, "it with truth may be said,  
While a bald pate I long have stood under,  
There have so many Captains walk'd over my head,  
That to see me quite scalp'd were no wonder!"

JOHN COLLINS (1804).

123. *Seamen on Shore*

## I

WHAT subjects can make their king and country more happy than you, by the offensive and defensive services you may do them at sea? What wealth is brought in or carried out of the kingdom but must pass through your hands and by your help? What honour has England of late years gained and all by your adventures and valour, which has made you excellent above all other subjects and all other nations? Who knows not that your parts and profession deserve favour of the State? Who knows not that the whole kingdom has use for you; and that there is a necessity to nourish you?

But whether it be the sea that works contrary effects to the land, or whether it be a liberty you feel ashore after you have been penned up in a ship like birds in a cage, or untamed horses when they are let loose; certain it is, neither birds nor horses can show more extravagant lewdness, more dissolute wildness, and less fear of God, than your carriage discovers when you come ashore and cast off the command your superior officers had over you. For though, in desperate perils at sea, you promise to yourselves amendment of life and perhaps vow never to try that kind of fortune more, as women in labour do, never to have to do with their husbands; yet when they are past they are soon forgot of both, and you return to your old accustomed vomit, without sense of promise, or danger escaped, but rather augment in your wicked courses.

He that could as easily reduce the ordinary seaman to civility and good behaviour ashore, as to be under the government of a discreet commander at sea, were more than man; for the nature of sailors is to stand more in awe of a mean officer at sea, whom they love and fear, than of a great person on land, whom they neither fear nor love.

SIR WILLIAM MONSON: *Naval Tracts*.

124. *Seamen on Shore*

## II

THE sole business of a seaman on shore, who has to go to sea again, is to take as much pleasure as he can. The moment he sets foot on dry ground he turns his back on all salt beef and other salt-water restrictions. His long absence, and the impossibility of getting land pleasures at sea, put him upon a sort of desperate appetite. He lands, like a conqueror taking possession. He has been debarred so long, that he is resolved to have that matter out with the inhabitants. They must render an account to him of their treasures, their women, their victualling-stores, their entertainments, their everything; and in return he will behave like a gentleman and scatter his gold.

His first sensation on landing is the strange firmness of the earth, which he goes treading in a sort of heavy light way, half waggoner and half dancing-master, his shoulders rolling, and his feet touching and going; the same way, in short, in which he keeps himself prepared for all the chances of the vessel, when on deck. There is always this appearance of lightness of foot and heavy strength of upper works in a sailor. And he feels it himself. He lets his jacket fly open, and his shoulders slouch, and his hair grow long, to be gathered into a heavy pigtail; but when full dressed he prides himself on a certain gentility of toe, on a white stocking and a *natty* shoe, issuing lightly out of the flowing blue trousers. His arms are neutral, hanging and swinging in a curve aloof; his hands half open, as if they had just been handling ropes, and had no object in life but to handle them again. He is proud of appearing in a new hat and slops, with a Belcher handkerchief flowing loosely round his neck, and the corner of another out of his pocket.

Thus equipped, with pinchbeck buckles on his shoes (which he bought for gold), he puts some tobacco in his mouth, not as if he were going to use it directly but as if he stuffed it in a pouch on one side, as a pelican does fish, to employ it hereafter; and so, with Bet Monson at his side, and perhaps a cane or whangee twisted under his other arm, sallies forth to take possession of all Lubberland. He buys everything that he comes athwart—nuts, gingerbread, apples,

shoe-strings, beer, brandy, gin, buckles, knives, a watch (two, if he has money enough), gowns and handkerchiefs for Bet and his mother and sisters, dozens of "Superfine Best Men's Cotton Stockings," dozens of "Superfine Best Women's Cotton Ditto," best good Check for Shirts (though he has too many already), infinite needles and thread (to sew his trousers with some day), a footman's laced hat, Bear's Grease, to make his hair grow (by way of a joke) several sticks, all sorts of Jew's articles, a flute (which he can't play and never intends), a leg of mutton, which he carries somewhere to roast, and for a piece of which the landlord of the *Ship* makes him pay twice what he gave for the whole; in short, all that money can be spent upon, which is everything but medicine gratis, and this he would insist on paying for. He would buy all the painted parrots on an Italian's head, on purpose to break them, rather than not spend his money. He has fiddles and a dance at the *Ship*, with oceans of flip and grog; and gives the blind fiddler tobacco for sweetmeats, and half-a-crown for treading on his toe. He asks the landlady, with a sigh, after her daughter Nance, who first fired his heart with her silk stockings; and finding that she is married and in trouble, leaves five half-crowns for her, which the old lady appropriates as part payment for a shilling in advance.

He goes to the Port playhouse with Bet Monson, and a great red handkerchief full of apples, gingerbread nuts, and fresh beef; calls out for the fiddlers and *Rule Britannia*; pelts Tom Sikes in the pit; and compares Othello to the black ship's cook in his white night-cap. When he comes to London, he and his messmates take a hackney-coach, full of Bet Monsons and tobacco-pipes, and go through the streets smoking and lolling out of the window. . . .

His officer on shore does much of all this, only generally in a higher taste. The moment he lands he buys quantities of jewellery and other valuables, for all the females of his acquaintance; and is taken in for every article. He sends in a cart-load of fresh meat to the ship, though he is going to town next day; and calling in at the chandler's for some candles, is persuaded to buy a dozen of green wax, with which he lights up the ship at evening; regretting that the fine moonlight hinders the effects of the colour. A man, with a

bundle beneath his arm, accosts him in an undertone; and, with a look in which respect for his knowledge is mixed with an avowed zeal for his own interest, asks if his Honour will just step under the gangway here and inspect some real India shawls. The gallant Lieutenant says to himself, "This fellow knows what's what, by his face"; and so he proves it, by being taken in on the spot. . . .

When the officer is superannuated or retires, he becomes, if intelligent and inquiring, one of the most agreeable old men in the world, equally welcome to the silent for his card-playing, and to the conversational for his recollections. He is fond of astronomy and books of voyages, and is immortal with all who know him for having been round the world, or seen the transit of Venus, or had one of his fingers carried off by a New Zealand hatchet, or a present of feathers from an Otaheitan beauty. If not elevated by his acquirements above some of his humbler tastes, he delights in a corner-cupboard, holding his coco-nuts and punch bowl; has his summer-house castellated and planted with wooden cannon; and sets up the figure of his old ship, the *Britannia* or the *Lovely Nancy*, for a statue in the garden; where it stares eternally with red cheeks and round black eyes, as if in astonishment at its situation.

LEIGH HUNT: *Essays*.

### 125. *Officers of H.M.S. Berwick on Shore*

ABOUT ten we entered Pisa, where they were celebrating the Carnival in a magnificent style, and we were told that 600 coaches were in the procession. The prince was among the number and appeared much gratified. Pelting with sugar plums is customary on this occasion; and one of our midshipmen pelted Lord Hervey in his coach; and when told that it was the British ambassador, and that he looked very angry, he immediately hove another volley at Lady Hervey, observing that she looked better tempered than his Excellency. . . .

It was our intention to have gone to Lucca and from thence to Florence; but all sublunary things are vain, as we were ordered

to sea sooner than was expected, and returned to Leghorn after five days absence, where we dined at an excellent ordinary at one of the best houses in the city. We had a strong party of English officers at the dinner, some of whom got rather merry before the cloth was off the table, and catching hold of the waiter they rolled him in the cloth with plates and dishes, the fellow roaring out all the while to no purpose. One midshipman took a loaf and let it fall out of the window (we were on the second floor) upon the jaw of an Italian in the street, which floored him, while others pelted legs and wings of fowls at those looking out of the opposite windows; but to their kind forbearance everything was taken as a joke and only laughed at. Would this have been the case in England?—where every hole and corner has a board threatening prosecution, and if you pass two or three stopping in the street, their conversation will be about law, hanging, or trade.

*Recollections of J. A. GARDNER.*

### 126. *Love for Love*

BEN LEGEND. Come, mistress, will you please to sit down? For, an you stand astern of that'n, we shall never grapple together.—Come. I'll haul you a chair. There. An you'll please to sit, I'll sit by you.

PRUE. You need not sit so near. If you have anything to say, I can hear you farther off. I an't deaf.

BEN. Why, that's true, as you say: nor I an't dumb. I can be heard as far off as another. I'll heave off to please you.—(*Sits farther off*). An we were a league asunder, I'd undertake to hold discourse with you, and 'twere a main high wind indeed and full in my teeth. Look you. Forsooth, I am, as it were, bound for the land of matrimony. 'Tis a voyage, d'ye see, that was none of my seeking. I was commanded by me father and, if you like it, mayhap I may steer into your harbour. How say you, mistress? . . .

PRUE. I don't know what to say to you, nor I don't care to speak with you at all.

BEN. No: I'm sorry for that.—But, pray, why are you so scornful:

PRUE. As long as one must not speak one's mind, one had better not speak at all I think. And truly I won't tell a lie for the matter.

BEN. Nay, you say true in that. 'Tis but folly to lie. For to speak one thing and to think just the contrary way is, as it were, to look one way and to row another. Now, for my part, d'ye see, I'm for carrying things above board. I'm not for keeping anything under hatches,—so that, if you ben't as willing as I, say so a' god's name. There's no harm done. Mayhap you may be shamefaced: Some maidens, tho' they love a man well enough, yet they don't care to tell'n so to's face. If that's the case, why—silence gives consent.

PRUE. But I'm sure it's not so, for I'll speak sooner than you should believe that. And I'll speak truth, though one should always tell a lie to a man. And I don't care. Let my father do what he will. I'm too big to be whipped. So I'll tell you plainly. I don't like you, nor love you at all: nor never will, that's more. So. There's your answer for you. And don't trouble me no more, you ugly thing!

BEN. Look you, young woman, you may learn to give good words, however. I spoke you fair, d'ye see, and civil.—As for your love or your liking I don't value it of a rope's end.—And mayhap I like you as little as you do me.—What I said was in obedience to father. Gad, I fear a whipping no more than you do. But I tell you one thing. If you should give such language at sea you'd have a cat o' nine tails laid across your shoulders. Flesh! Who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me of her own accord. Whatever you think of yourself, Gad, I don't think you are any more to compare to her than a can of small beer to a bowl of punch.

PRUE. Well, and there's a handsome gentleman and a fine gentleman, and a sweet gentleman, that was here, that loves me. And I love him. And if he sees you speak to me any more he'll thrash your jacket for you. He will, you great sea-calf.

BEN. What! Do you mean that fair-weather spark that was here just now? Will he thrash my jacket?—Let'n!—Let'n! But an he comes near me, mayhap I may giv'n a salt eel for supper, for all



that. What does father mean to leave me alone as soon as I come home with such a dirty dowdy? Sea-calf! I an't calf enough to lick your chalked face, you cheese-curd, you!—Marry thee! Oons! I'll marry a Lapland witch as soon and live upon selling contrary winds and wrecked vessels.

PRUE. I won't be called names, nor I won't be abused thus. So, I won't.—If I were a man (*cries*), you durst not talk at this rate.—No, you durst not, you stinking tar-barrel!

WILLIAM CONGREVE: *Love for Love*.

### 127. *Naval Wives Abroad*

It is a great mistake for an officer to come here with his wife and family. Who would think of bringing a poor woman from the society of her friends to live, where?—at Malta? All his pay would not suffice for her house rent. At Palermo, among the Princesses? That, in my opinion, whatever she might think of it, is worse: unless she can paint her face well, and intrigue by moonlight, she will be nobody there. She has no more chance of seeing her husband here than if she were in England, on which she will fret, and a teasing wife is the devil. I have been more than six years from home, and there is my good wife, who makes herself as contented as she can; but she is a sensible woman, and knows that the times require that I should be abroad, and that it is proper she should be at home.

COLLINGWOOD: *Letters*.

### 128. *Nelson's Prayer on the Eve of Trafalgar*

MAY the Great God, whom I worship, grant to my Country and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory; and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature of the British fleet. For

myself, individually, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my Country faithfully. To Him I resign myself and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen. Amen. Amen.

LORD NELSON.

## PART V.—MEN AND SHIPS

### 129. *Love of Ships*

FOR all that has been said of the love that certain natures (on shore) have professed to feel for it, for all the celebrations it has been the object of in prose and song, the sea has never been friendly to man. At most it has been the accomplice of human restlessness, and playing the part of dangerous abettor of world-wide ambitions. Faithful to no race after the manner of the kindly earth, receiving no impress of valour and toil and self-sacrifice, recognising no finality of dominion, the sea has never adopted the cause of its masters like those lands where the victorious nations of mankind have taken root, rocking their cradles and setting up their gravestones. He—man or people—who, putting his trust in the friendship of the sea, neglects the strength and cunning of his right hand, is a fool! As if it were too great, too mighty for common virtues, the ocean has no compassion, no faith, no law, no memory. Its fickleness is to be held true to men's purposes only by an undaunted resolution and by a sleepless, armed, jealous vigilance, in which, perhaps, there has always been more hate than love. *Odi et amo* may well be the confession of those who consciously or blindly have surrendered their existence to the fascination of the sea. All the tempestuous passions of mankind's young days, the love of loot and the love of glory, the love of adventure and the love of danger, with the great love of the unknown and vast dreams of dominion and power, have passed like images reflected from a mirror, leaving no record upon the mysterious face of the sea. Impenetrable and heartless, the sea has given nothing of itself to the suitors for its precarious favours. Unlike the earth, it cannot be subjugated at any cost of patience and toil. For all its fascination that has lured so many to a violent death, its immensity has never been loved as the mountains, the plains, the desert itself, have been loved. Indeed, I suspect that, leaving aside the protestations and tributes of writers who, one is safe in saying, care for little else in the world than the rhythm of their lines and the cadence of their phrase, the love of the sea, to

which some men and nations confess so readily, is a complex sentiment wherein pride enters for much, necessity for not a little, and the love of ships—the untiring servants of our hopes and our self-esteem—for the best and most genuine part. For the hundreds who have reviled the sea, beginning with Shakespeare in the line—

“More fell than hunger, anguish, or the sea,”

down to the last obscure sea-dog of the “old model,” having but few words and still fewer thoughts, there could not be found, I believe, one sailor who has ever coupled a curse with the good or bad name of a ship. If ever his profanity, provoked by the hardships of the sea, went so far as to touch his ship, it would be lightly, as a hand may, without sin, be laid in the way of kindness on a woman.

CONRAD: *The Mirror of the Sea*.

### 130. *Before the Armada*

I PROTEST before God, and as my soul shall answer for it, that I think there were never in any place in the world worthier ships than these are, for so many. And as few we are, if the King of Spain's forces be not hundreds, we will make good sport with them. And I pray you tell her Majesty from me that her money was well given for the *Ark Raleigh* [*Ark Royal*], for I think her the odd ship in the world for all conditions; and truly I think there can no great ship make me change and go out of her. We can see no sail, great nor small, but how far soever they be off, we fetch them and speak with them.

*Howard to Burghley. Feb. 29, 1588.*

Our ships doth show themselves like gallants here. I assure you it will do a man's heart good to behold them; and would to God the Prince of Parma were upon the seas with all his forces, and we in view of them; then I doubt not but that you should hear that we would make his enterprise very unpleasant to him.

*Wynter to the Principal Officers. Feb. 28, 1588.*

My good Lord, there is here the gallantest company of captains, soldiers, and mariners that I think ever was seen in England. It were a pity they should lack meat when they are so desirous to spend their lives in her Majesty's service.

*Howard to Burghley. May 28, 1588.*

HE (Philip II) very well knows how much consideration ought to be paid to such a fleet as the English fleet, both on account of its size, and also because the English are men of another mettle from the Spaniards, and enjoy the reputation of being, above all the Western nations, expert and active in all naval operations, and great sea dogs.

*Venetian Ambassador in France to the Doge. April 8, 1588.*

### 131. *Frigate on Convoy Duty*

THE wind veered round to the Southward, when we had been at sea about ten days, and the fleet braced sharp up to battle with its opposition. It was indeed an inspiring thing to gaze on so many coursers of the sea, as they galloped freely before the gale; but now the scene took on and increased in attraction. The ships gained new impetus as they approached each other and bowed as they passed on opposite tacks, and then shot past with the speed of an arrow from a bow; and as the distance grew they seemed to faint in the force of flight, as if the power which had drawn them on, and dashed them along had spent itself. There again two might be seen racing side by side, straining for the mastery, bent down by the wind's pressure on their triple mountain piles of canvas, till the decks to leeward furrowed the water, each lurching and plunging in the swashing heaves of the sea, by fits, so that the stander there, and the looker on here, held their breaths, as if the whole bulks would topple over, and be whelmed beneath the ocean. But each gracefully and gloriously swung upwards again, and laughed in her security, while some more clumsily fashioned, built with a view to gormandizing a huge cargo, rather than to carry one quickly, dragged themselves

heavily and slowly along, with creaking masts writhing under every patch of canvas they could muster, in the vain effort to keep pace with their more fortunate and fleetly comrades. They faded to less and less, as the space between them and the better sailers widened. Then was the time for the "A——" to revel in her 'falcon speed. She darted down and along to the uttermost limits of the scattered fleet: now whizzing to the east, throwing up broad and spreading fountains of spray as she spilt the oncoming billows in her westward dash; then rocking from side to side, till her yard arms pointed at the yeasty waves, as she swung in balance before the wind in her northward run: now bounding to this point, now darting to that, and wheeling round all with the rushing sweep of an eagle round a flock of swans, that flap their wings in laboured motion, until resuming her first position, she half enfolded her wings, and floated as she rested on her sea. 'Faith, reader, I began to be proud of my ship!

C. R. PEMBERTON: *The Autobiography of Pel. Verjuice* (1833).

### 132. *Making Sail*

SPITHEAD was the goal of our travel. "Up and down" was sung out from the forecastle: then "stopper the cable," and "pall the capstern," from the quarter-deck; and "unship the bars," "all hands make sail," followed, and instantly the shrouds, on either side, were filled with men like swarming bees: no voice was heard but his who gave the command, and a noble voice it was; but his words were repeated in the out-poured shrillness of the silver calls of the boatswain and his mates; and when every man had set his foot in the rigging, with hands grasping the ratlines, "Away aloft!"—away the swarm rushed with an upward rapidity, as if the life of each depended on his being first. There was another pause: then "trice up, lay out," and the long-outstretched naked limbs of the ship were everywhere, upmingling in the blue of the sky, and down and over the sea, alive with creeping things, hurrying out to their extremities, between them and certain destruction, was a

curved, swinging, loose rope, on which they struck their feet: this was all that held them from plunging into the sea, or crashing to mummy on the deck. Strange as it is, reader, there is not an atom of danger in this. I never saw an accidental fall from a ship's yards in my life.

I had seen sails set on board the Tender and other ships, but on a small scale; here and there a man dotted the shrouds and the yards; but, on this occasion, hundreds were rushing against each other, each only anxious to be the first and to do his own work, at any expense of danger or life to the others. All seemed riot, confusion, desperation; but all was silent; for all was in obedience to a sure design; it was order, precision, exactness, and familiarity with the action. "Let fall, sheet home, haul o' board, hoist away!" were the next orders, delivered in one breath, and in an instant. Reader, this is one of the spectacles that throws such a charm over the trade of war, that hearts which would shudder while the mind adverted to its horrors, and sicken with contempt at the paltry yet infamous sophistries, which have been too, too often employed in fashioning and encouraging it, throb with delight on beholding such spectacles, and pant for this and a thousand others, which throw around war an attractive splendour. If the blade were permitted to corrode with the blood in which it had been bathed, its owner would hate it and scorn himself: it is the sword's polish and the hilt's gilt which recommend it as an ornament to the hand; there is the loadstone of ladies' hearts. It is in vain that you will look even in the most skillfully manned merchant vessels for any thing which can glimpse a conception of a ship of war making sail from her anchorage. In a merchant man, the sails are spread and set stragglingly and partially; portions tumble down, flap about, and slowly, creepingly spread at intervals and from several points; but with the words I have quoted, the instant flashing effect is magical and magnificent: the minute-ago-naked masts, beams, and yards, the whole of the uptowering scaffolding and beautiful skeleton, is clothed in fifteen thousand feet of graceful drapery, so perfectly fitted, and so admirably put on: then out it swells and curves in the wind: it is beauty itself. Not a word is spoken until "belay!" then the rumbling of

four or five hundred stamping feet: the rattling of blocks and pulleys, the whirring of ropes, and the grinding of massive beams which are by these adjusted in their required positions, are all at once stopped. Still the immense and splendidly compact machine lies motionless: the anchor has not yet quitted its mighty grip of the solid ground, ten fathoms beneath the surface of that glassy field on which she sits, but ready for her start. "Ship the capstern bars," a few more turns and the anchor is away; "Man the cat and fish" (odd things there are in a ship, reader, but I cannot stop to explain), the proud and gorgeous mass of machinery, slowly gathering progress, glides round into her destined track. Track! there is no track. She is the engineer of her own road and digs it up as she advances and closes it up behind, leaving no line to denote the course of her journey. She is a huge sea dragon, swimming along with her enormous wings thrown upwards to the air, while her copper belly curls up the hissing and boiling foam of the sea, and dashes the clipping waves from her ponderous bulk, as if in derision of their familiar touch. Sulphurous lightning, and thunder, and destruction, are engirdled within her many strong and massive ribs, ready to be spit forth at once from her fifty gaping mouths. Yet is she so beautiful; and she slides along with so much grace, that her every motion might seem the dignity of joy.

C. R. PEMBERTON: *The Autobiography of Pel. Verjuice* (1833).

### 133. *A Memory*

WHEN I first saw her there was a smoke of mist about her as high as her foreyard. Her topsails and flying kites had a faint glow upon them where the dawn caught them. Then the mist rolled away from her, so that we could see her hull and the glimmer of the red sidelight as it was hoisted inboard. She was rolling slightly, tracing an arc against the heaven, and as I watched her the glow upon her deepened, till every sail she wore burned rosily like an opal turned to the sun, like a fiery jewel. She was radiant, she was of an immortal beauty, that swaying, delicate clipper. Coming as she came,



out of the mist into the dawn, she was like a spirit, like an intellectual presence. Her hull glowed, her rails glowed; there was colour upon the boats and tackling. She was a lofty ship (with skysails and royal staysails) and it was wonderful to watch her, blushing in the sun, swaying and curveting. She was alive with a more than mortal life. One thought that she would speak in some strange language or break out into music which would express the sea and that great flower in the sky. She came trembling down to us, rising up high and plunging; showing the red lead below her water-line; then diving down till the smother bubbled over her hawseholes. She bowed and curveted; the light caught the skylights on the poop; she gleamed and sparkled; she shook the sea from her as she rose. There was no man aboard of us but was filled with the beauty of that ship. I think they would have cheered her had she been a little nearer to us; but as it was, we ran up our flags in answer to her, adding our position and comparing our chronometers, then dipping our ensigns and standing away. For some minutes I watched her, as I made up the flags before putting them back in their cupboard. The old mate limped up to me, and spat and swore. "That's one of the most beautiful sights of the world," he said. "That, and a cornfield, and a woman with her child. It's beauty and strength. How would you like to have one of them skysails round your neck?" I gave him some answer, and continued to watch her, till the beautiful, precise hull, with all its lovely detail, had become blurred to leeward, where the sun was now marching in triumph, the helm of a golden warrior plumed in cirrus.

MASEFIELD: *A Tarpaulin Muster*

### 134. *In Dock*

A SHIP in dock, surrounded by quays and the walls of warehouses, has the appearance of a prisoner meditating upon freedom in the sadness of a free spirit put under restraint. Chain cables and stout ropes keep her bound to stone posts at the edge of a paved shore, and a berthing-master, with brass buttons on his coat, walks about

like a weather-beaten and ruddy gaoler, casting jealous, watchful glances upon the moorings that fetter a ship lying passive and still and safe, as if lost in deep regrets of her days of liberty and danger on the sea. . . .

Fortunately, nothing can deface the beauty of a ship. That sense of a dungeon, that sense of a horrible and degrading misfortune overtaking a creature fair to see and safe to trust, attaches only to ships moored in the docks of great European ports. You feel that they are dishonestly locked up, to be hunted about from wharf to wharf on a dark, greasy, square pool of black water as a brutal reward at the end of a faithful voyage.

A ship anchored in an open roadstead, with cargo-lighters alongside and her own tackle swinging the burden over the rail, is accomplishing in freedom a function of her life. There is no restraint; there is space: clear water around her, and a clear sky above her mast-heads, with a landscape of green hills and charming bays opening around her anchorage. She is not abandoned by her own men to the tender mercies of shore people. She still shelters, and is looked after by, her own devoted little band, and you feel that presently she will glide between the headlands and disappear. It is only at home, in dock, that she lies abandoned, shut off from freedom by all the artifices of men that think of quick despatch and profitable freights. It is only then that the odious, rectangular shadows of walls and roofs fall upon her decks, with showers of soot.

CONRAD: *The Mirror of the Sea*

### 135. *Clubhauling the Diomedé*

THE ship continued to hold her course good; and we were within half a mile of the point, and fully expected to weather it, when again the wet and heavy sails flapped in the wind, and the ship broke off two points as before. The officers and seamen were aghast, for the ship's head was right on to the breakers. "Luff now, all you can, quarter-master," cried the captain. "Send the men aft

directly. My lads, there is not time for words—I am going to *club-haul* the ship, for there is no room to wear. The only chance you have of safety, is to be cool, watch my eye, and execute my orders with precision. Away to your stations for tacking ship. Hands by the best bower anchor. Mr. Wilson, attend below with the carpenter and mates, ready to cut away the cable at the moment that I give the order. Silence there, fore and aft. Quarter-master, keep her full again for stays. Mind you ease the helm down when I tell you." About a minute passed before the captain gave any further orders. The ship had closed to within a quarter of a mile of the beach, and the waves curled and topped around us, bearing us down upon the shore, which presented one continued surface of foam, extending to within half a cable's length of our position, at which distance the enormous waves culminated and fell with the report of thunder. The captain waved his hand in silence to the quarter-master at the wheel, and the helm was put down. The ship turned slowly to the wind, pitching and chopping as the sails were spilling. When she had lost her way, the captain gave the order, "Let go the anchor. We will haul all at once, Mr. Falcon," said the captain. Not a word was spoken, the men went to the fore-brace, which had not been manned; most of them knew, although I did not, that if the ship's head did not go round the other way, we should be on shore, and among the breakers, in half a minute. I thought at the time that the captain had said that he would haul all the yards at once, there appeared to be doubt or dissent on the countenance of Mr. Falcon; and I was afterwards told that he had not agreed with the captain, but he was too good an officer, and knew that there was no time for discussion, to make any remark; and the event proved that the captain was right. At last the ship was head to wind, and the captain gave the signal. The yards flew round with such a creaking noise, that I thought the masts had gone over the side, and the next moment the wind had caught the sails, and the ship, which for a moment or two had been on an even keel, careened over to the gunnels with its force. The captain, who stood upon the weather hammock rails, holding by the main-rigging, ordered the helm amidships, looked full at the sails, and then at the cable, which

grew broad upon the weather bow, and held the ship from nearing the shore. At last he cried, "Cut away the cable"! A few strokes of the axes were heard, and then the cable flew out of the hawse-hole in a blaze of fire, from the violence of the friction, and disappeared under a huge wave, which struck us on the chess-tree, and deluged us with water fore and aft. But we were now on the other tack, and the ship regained her way, and we had evidently increased our distance from the land.

MARRYAT: *Peter Simple*

### 136. 1914

It is a heavenly piece of coast, all this southern bulge of Devon, with its little secret rivers and untainted towns. The people are good and the land. So, with reservations, is its sea even beyond the Sound. . . .

Upon this piece of coast, setting out once from Plymouth, there came to me an experience of no particular moment as history, but of powerful effect upon my mind. It marked, in a sort of mysterious omen way, or, perhaps, I should say in a sort of visionary way, the unleashing of the Great War. . . .

When I had set out from Plymouth there was nothing but rumour, nothing certain. The Fleet had dispersed already some days past from the great review at Spithead, and was, as we were told, in the Atlantic at manœuvres. A night, a day, and now another night had passed; I had heard no news.

Nothing was further from my mind than war and armament as the sun rose on that glorious July morning, right out of a clean horizon, towards which the wind blew fresh and cool. It was a light but steady wind of morning that filled my sails as I sat at the tiller with a blanket about me, and laying her head to the north.

We had just rounded the Start at dawn. My companion went below to sleep. I watched, over the quarter, the Start Light flashing pale and white in the broadening day, and at last extinguished. Then the sun rose, as I have said. Immediately after its rising a sort of light haze filled the air to the eastward. It was denser than it

seemed to be, for it did not obscure the low disk of the sun, nor redden it, but, as you will read in a moment, it performed a mystery. The little ship slipped on, up past the Skerries Bank, and I could see far off the headland which bounds Dart Bay. There was no sail in sight. I was alone upon the sea; and the breeze neither freshening nor lowering, but giving a hearty line of course (along which we slipped, perhaps, five knots or six) made the water speak merrily upon the bows and along the run of our low sides. In this loneliness and content, as I sailed northward, I chanced to look after an hour's steering or so, eastward again towards the open sea—and then it was that there passed me the vision I shall remember for ever, or for so long as the longest life may last.

Like ghosts, like things themselves made out of mist, there passed between me and the newly risen sun, a procession of great forms, all in line, hastening eastward. It was the Fleet recalled.

The slight haze along that distant water had thickened perhaps, imperceptibly; or perhaps the great speed of the men-of-war buried them too quickly in the distance. But, from whatever cause, this marvel was of short duration. It was seen for a moment, and in a moment it was gone.

Then I knew that war would come.

HILAIRE BELLOC: *The Cruise of the Nona*

### 137. *Leave Her, Johnny*

(PUMPING AND HALLIARDS CHANTY)

I THOUGHT I heard the captain say,  
    *Leave her, Johnny, leave her;*  
You may go ashore and touch your pay,  
    *It's time for us to leave her.*

You may make her fast, and pack your gear,  
    *Leave her, Johnny, leave her;*  
And leave her moored to the West Street Pier,  
    *It's time for us to leave her.*

The winds were foul, the work was hard,  
*Leave her, Johnny, leave her;*  
From Liverpool Docks to Brooklyn Yard,  
*It's time for us to leave her.*

She would neither steer, nor stay, nor wear.  
*Leave her, Johnny, leave her;*  
She shipped it green and she made us swear,  
*It's time for us to leave her.*

She would neither wear, nor steer, nor stay,  
*Leave her, Johnny, leave her;*  
Her running rigging carried away,  
*It's time for us to leave her.*

The winds were foul, the trip was long,  
*Leave her, Johnny, leave her;*  
Before we go we'll sing a song,  
*It's time for us to leave her.*

We'll sing, Oh, may we never be,  
*Leave her, Johnny, leave her;*  
On a hungry ship the like of she,  
*It's time for us to leave her.*

### 138. *Homecoming*

A WEEK afterwards the *Narcissus* entered the chops of the Channel.

Under white wings she skimmed low over the blue sea like a great tired bird speeding to its nest. The clouds raced with her mastheads; they rose astern enormous and white, soared to the zenith, flew past, and, falling down the wide curve of the sky, seemed to dash headlong into the sea—the clouds swifter than the ship, more free, but without a home. The coast to welcome her stepped out of space into the sunshine. The lofty headlands trod masterfully into the sea; the wide bays smiled in the light; the

shadows of homeless clouds ran along the sunny plains, leaped over the valleys, without a check darted up the hills, rolled down the slopes; and the sunshine pursued them with patches of running brightness. On the brows of the dark cliffs white lighthouses shone in pillars of light. The Channel glittered like a blue mantle shot with gold and starred by the silver of the capping seas. The *Narcissus* rushed past the headlands and the bays. Outward-bound vessels crossed her track, lying over, and with their masts stripped for a slogging fight with the hard sou'wester. And, inshore, a string of smoking steamboats waddled, hugging the coast, like migrating and amphibious monsters, distrustful of the restless waves.

At night the headlands retreated, the bays advanced into one unbroken line of gloom. The lights of the earth mingled with the lights of heaven; and above the tossing lanterns of a trawling fleet a great lighthouse shone steadily, like an enormous riding light burning above a vessel of fabulous dimensions. Below its steady glow, the coast, stretching away straight and black, resembled the high side of an indestructible craft riding motionless upon the immortal and unresting sea. The dark land lay alone in the midst of the waters, like a mighty ship bestarred with vigilant lights—a ship carrying the burden of millions of lives—a ship freighted with dross and with jewels, with gold and with steel. She towered up immense and strong, guarding priceless traditions and untold suffering, sheltering glorious memories and base forgetfulness, ignoble virtues and splendid transgressions. A great ship! For ages had the ocean battered in vain her enduring sides; she was there when the world was vaster and darker, when the sea was great and mysterious, and ready to surrender the prize of fame to audacious men. A ship mother of fleets and nations! The great flagship of the race, stronger than the storms! and anchored in the open sea.

CONRAD: *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

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